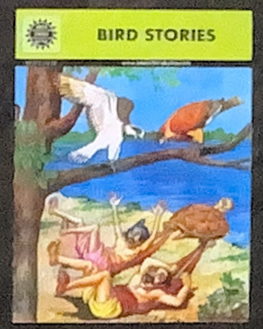
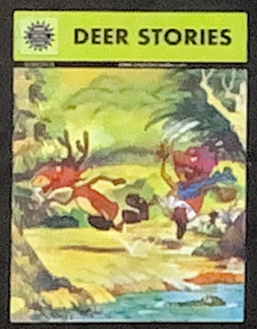
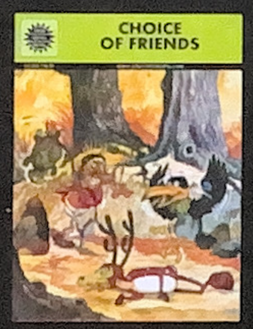
NANDIVISHALA

These Jataka tales are a wake-up call to all ungrateful, arrogant, hypocritical and self-serving liars. Full of humour and sound advice, they reveal the tyrannical power of money, the foolishness of superstition, and the dangers of losing self-control. So, read and be entertained, and laugh as you learn. And remember, the good always triumph.

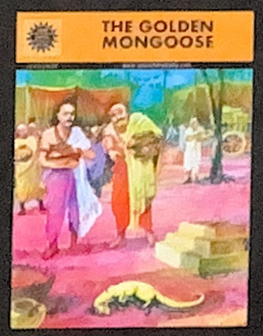
OTHER ACK FABLES & HUMOUR:



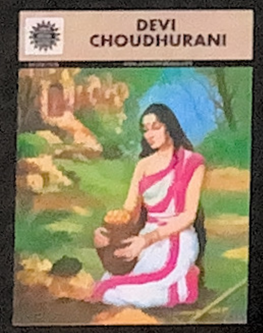




ALSO LOOK FOR:



EPICS & MYTHOLOGY



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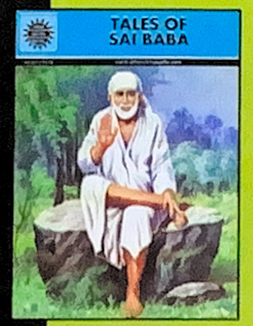

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FABLES & HUMOUR

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NANDI VISHALA

A BRAHMAN ONCE RECEIVED THE GIFT OF A BULL-CALF WHOM HE NAMED NANDI VISHALA.

HE LOOKED AFTER IT WELL, AND IT GREW INTO A FINE, STURDY BULL.

THE KIND BRAHMAN HAS BROUGHT ME UP WITH LOVING CARE, AS IF I WERE HIS OWN SON. I MUST REPAY HIM FOR ALL HIS TROUBLE.

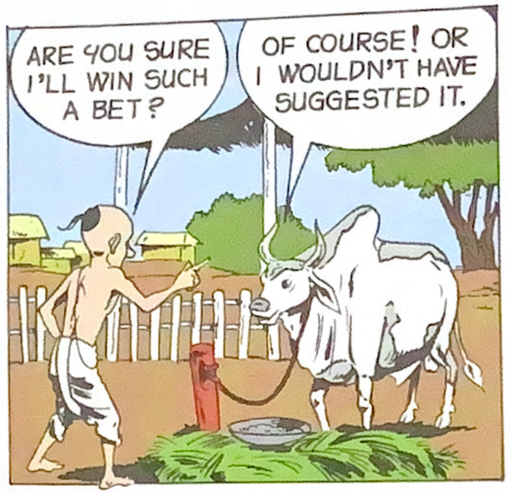
ONE DAY—

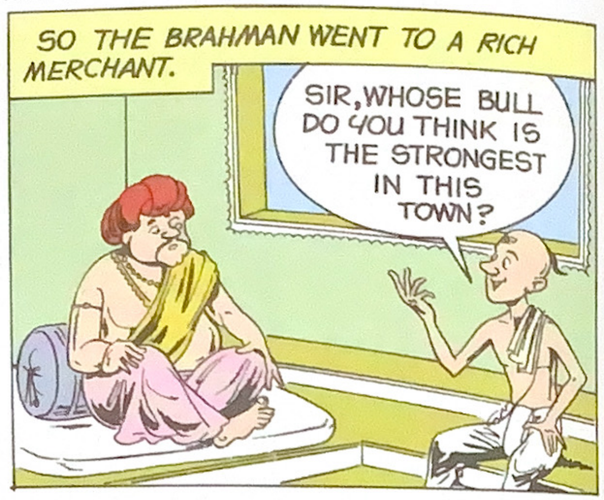
GO TO A RICH MERCHANT. TELL HIM THAT YOUR BULL CAN DRAW A HUNDRED LOADED CARTS. MAKE A BET ON THAT FOR A THOUSAND PIECES OF GOLD.

THE BRAHMAN COULD NOT BELIEVE HIS EARS.

AM I DREAMING OR HAVE I GONE MAD? I HEARD MY BULL TALKING!

YOU ARE NOT DREAMING, MASTER. DO AS I SAY. IT WILL BRING YOU GOOD FORTUNE.

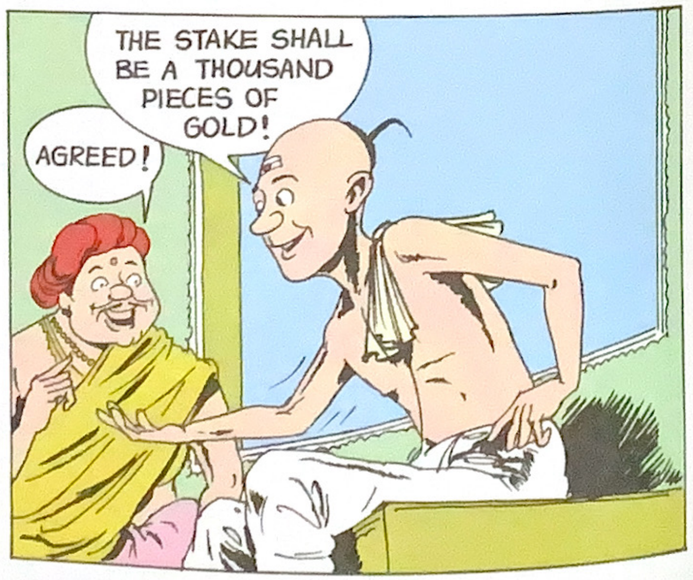

ARE YOU SURE I'LL WIN SUCH A BET?
OF COURSE! OR I WOULDN'T HAVE SUGGESTED IT.

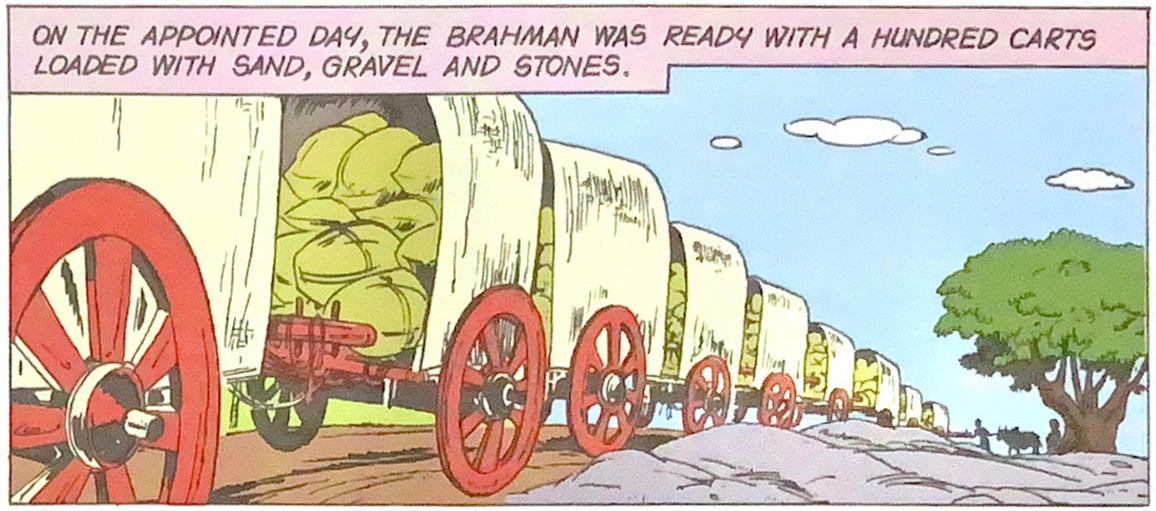

SO THE BRAHMAN WENT TO A RICH MERCHANT.
SIR, WHOSE BULL DO YOU THINK IS THE STRONGEST IN THIS TOWN?

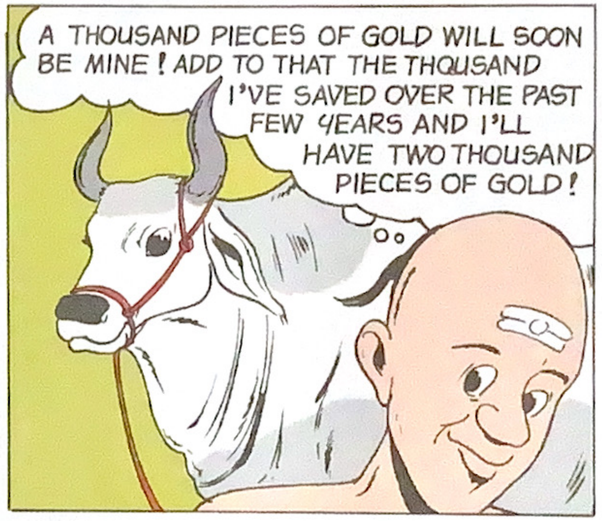
THERE ARE MANY STRONG BULLS IN THIS TOWN BUT MINE ARE THE STRONGEST.
WELL, I HAVE A BULL WHO CAN PULL A HUNDRED LOADED CARTS. CAN YOURS DO BETTER THAN THAT?

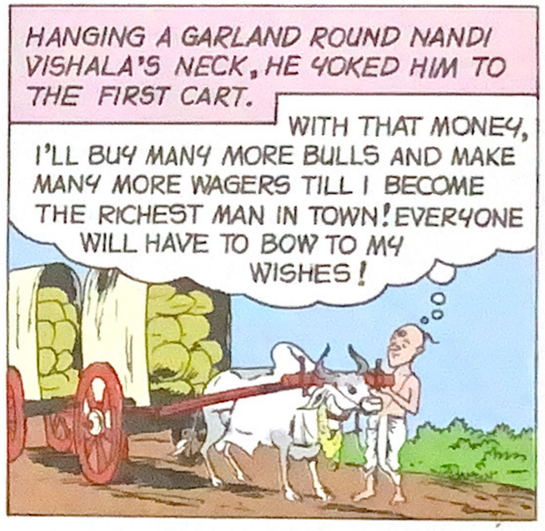
THE MERCHANT LAUGHED—
YOU MUST BE JOKING!
I'M NOT!

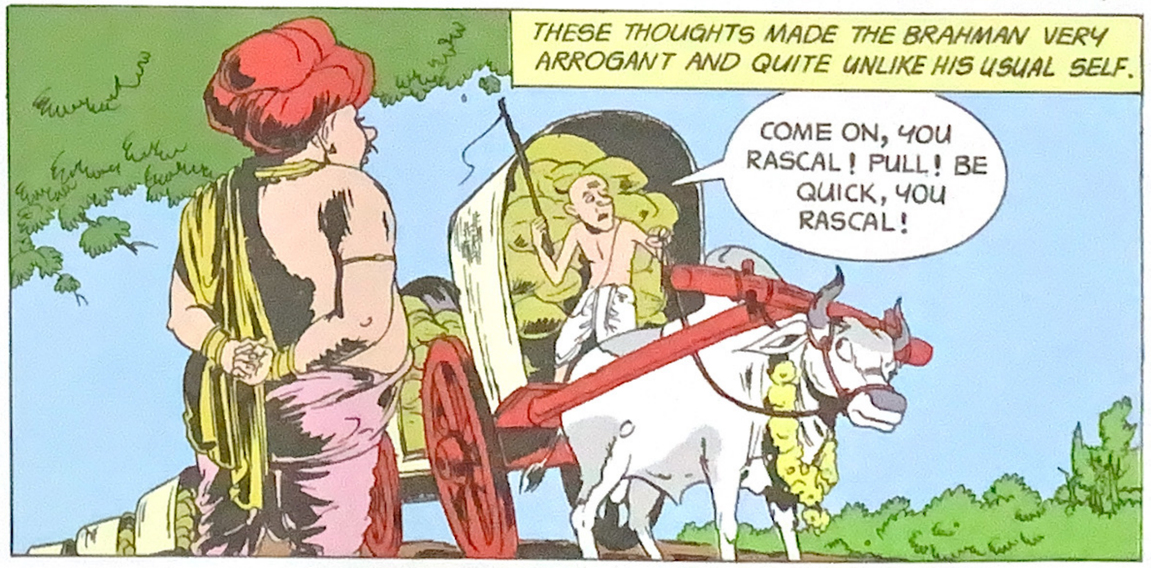
IT'S IMPOSSIBLE! NO BULL CAN DRAW A HUNDRED LOADED CARTS. I'M WILLING TO MAKE A WAGER ON THAT.

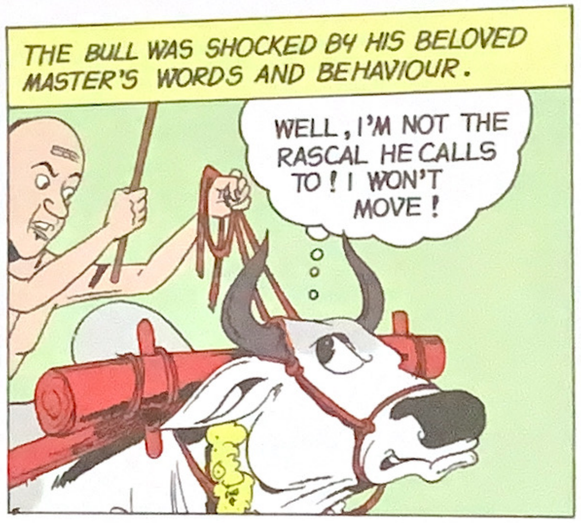

THE STAKE SHALL BE A THOUSAND PIECES OF GOLD!
AGREED!

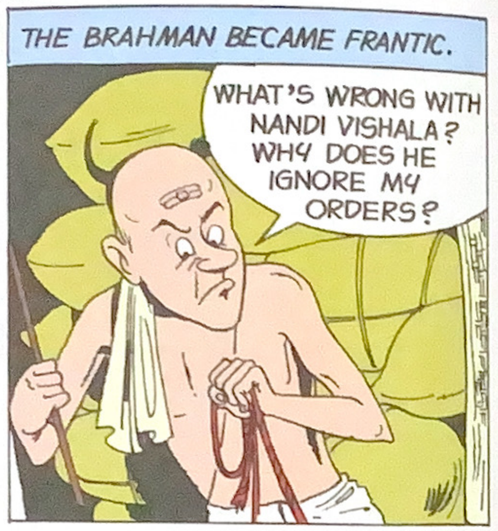

ON THE APPOINTED DAY, THE BRAHMAN WAS READY WITH A HUNDRED CARTS LOADED WITH SAND, GRAVEL AND STONES.

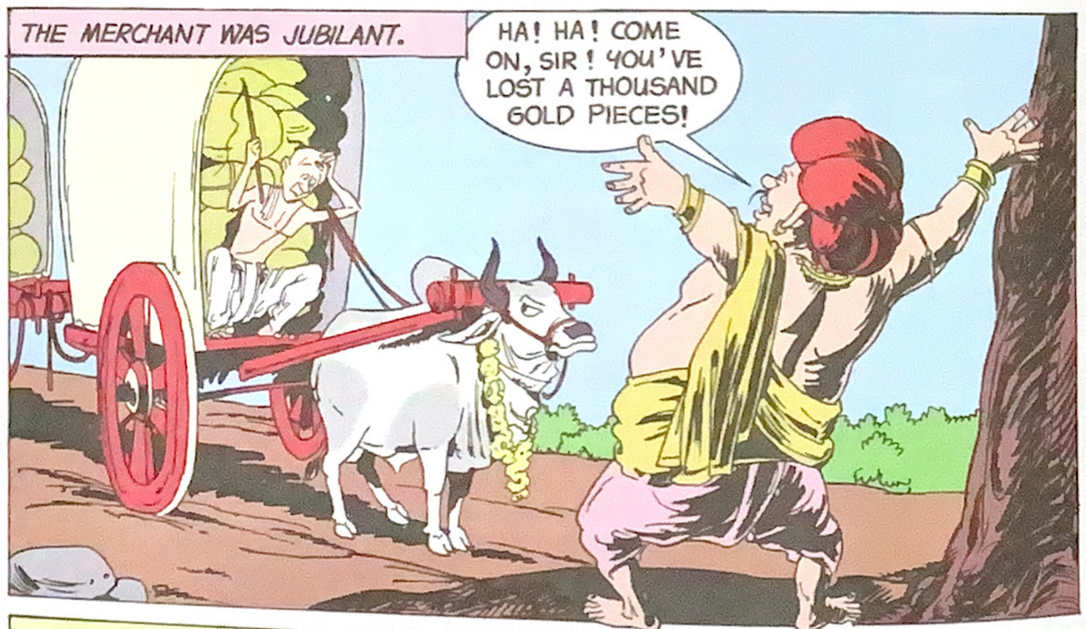

A THOUSAND PIECES OF GOLD WILL SOON BE MINE! ADD TO THAT THE THOUSAND I'VE SAVED OVER THE PAST FEW YEARS AND I'LL HAVE TWO THOUSAND PIECES OF GOLD!


HANGING A GARLAND ROUND NANDI VISHALA'S NECK, HE YOKED HIM TO THE FIRST CART.
WITH THAT MONEY, I'LL BUY MANY MORE BULLS AND MAKE MANY MORE WAGERS TILL I BECOME THE RICHEST MAN IN TOWN! EVERYONE WILL HAVE TO BOW TO MY WISHES!

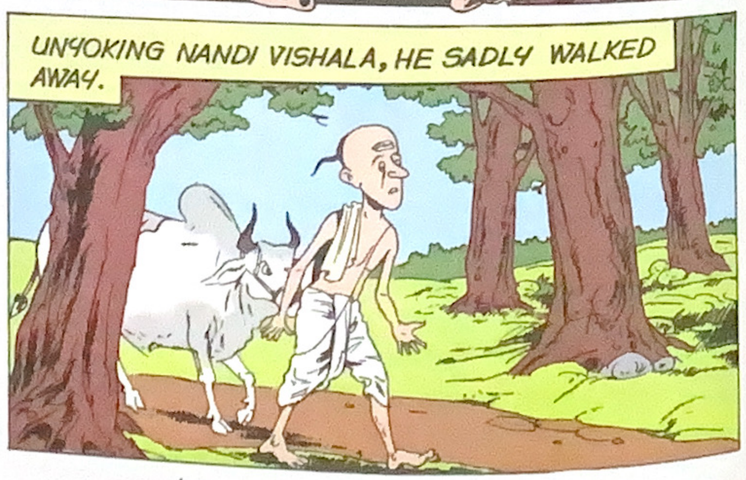

THESE THOUGHTS MADE THE BRAHMAN VERY ARROGANT AND QUITE UNLIKE HIS USUAL SELF.
COME ON, YOU RASCAL! PULL! BE QUICK, YOU RASCAL!

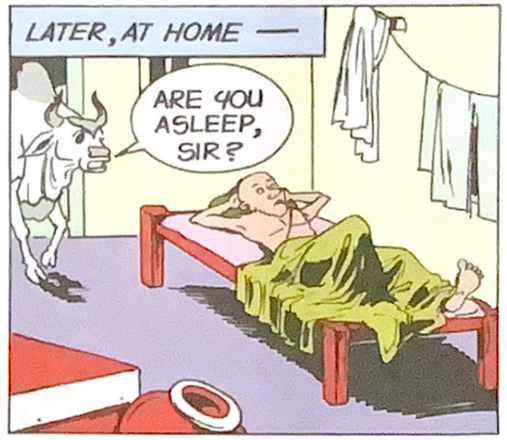

THE BULL WAS SHOCKED BY HIS BELOVED MASTER'S WORDS AND BEHAVIOUR.
WELL, I'M NOT THE RASCAL HE CALLS TO! I WON'T MOVE!


THE BRAHMAN BECAME FRANTIC.
WHAT'S WRONG WITH NANDI VISHALA? WHY DOES HE IGNORE MY ORDERS?

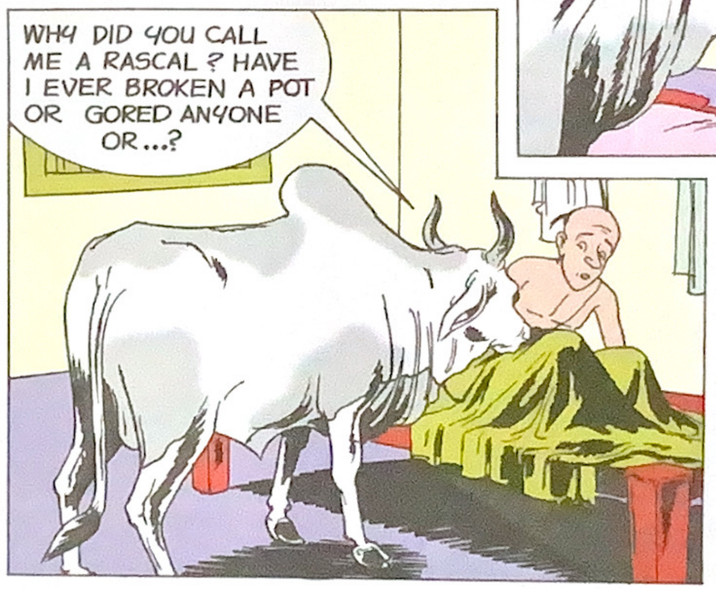

THE MERCHANT WAS JUBILANT.
HA! HA! COME ON, SIR! YOU'VE LOST A THOUSAND GOLD PIECES!

THE BRAHMAN HAD TO GO AND BRING THE GOLD HE HAD KEPT HIDDEN AT HOME.
ALL MY LIFE'S SAVINGS GONE!

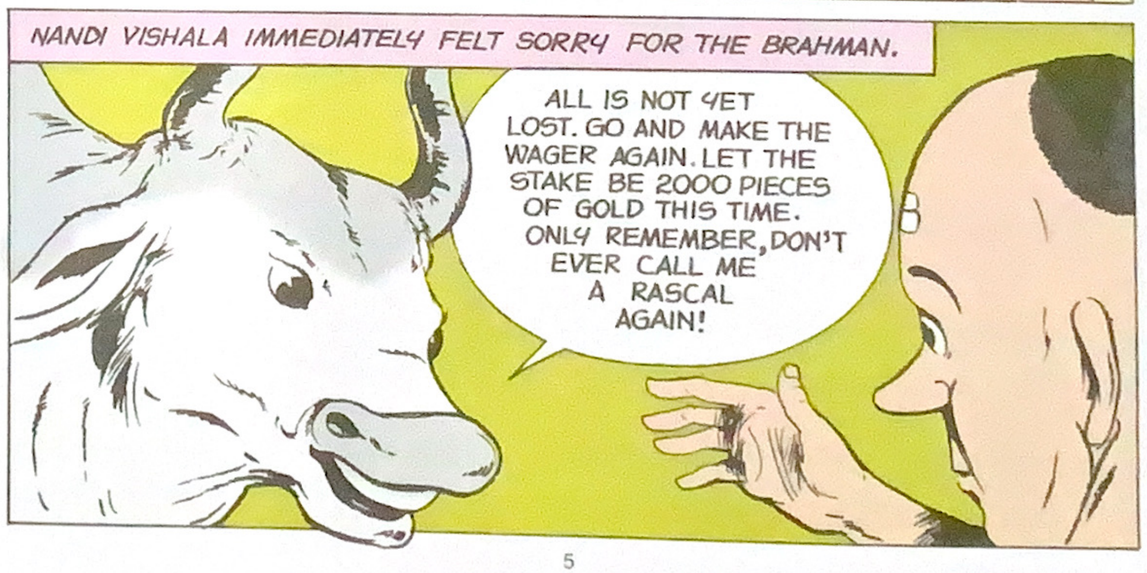

UNYOKING NANDI VISHALA, HE SADLY WALKED AWAY.


LATER, AT HOME —
ARE YOU ASLEEP, SIR?

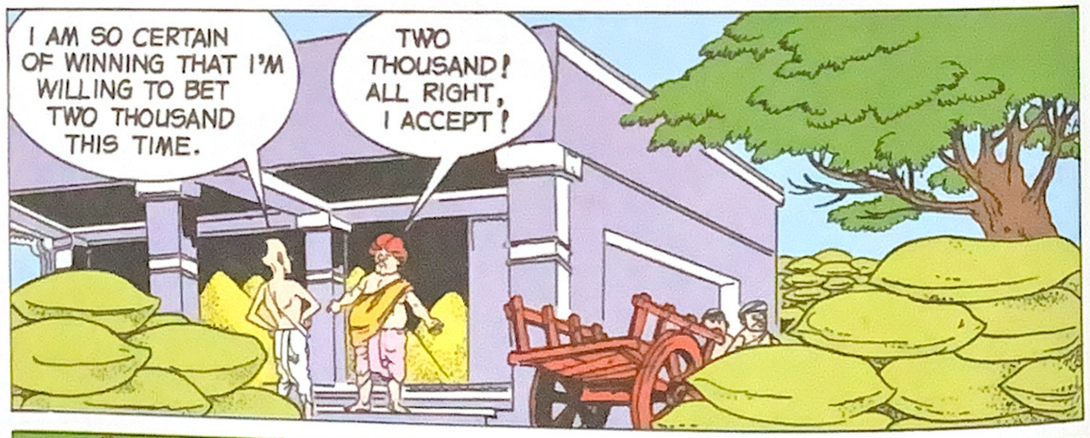
HOW CAN I SLEEP WHEN I'VE LOST ALL MY SAVINGS? I SHOULD NEVER HAVE LISTENED TO YOU!

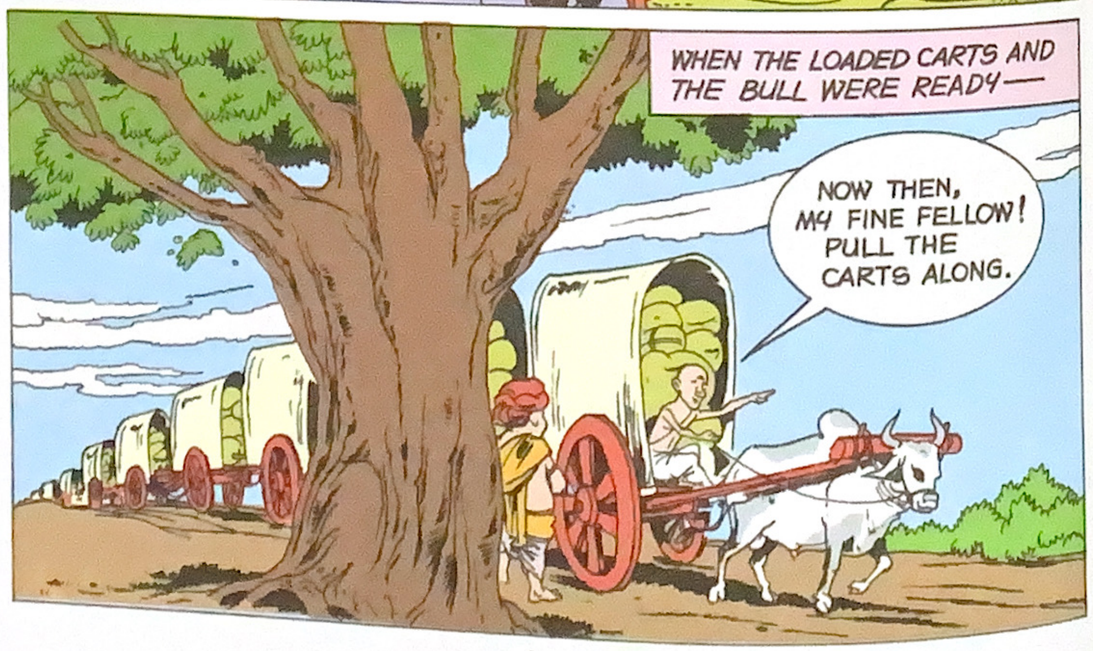

WHY DID YOU CALL ME A RASCAL? HAVE I EVER BROKEN A POT OR GORED ANYONE OR...?

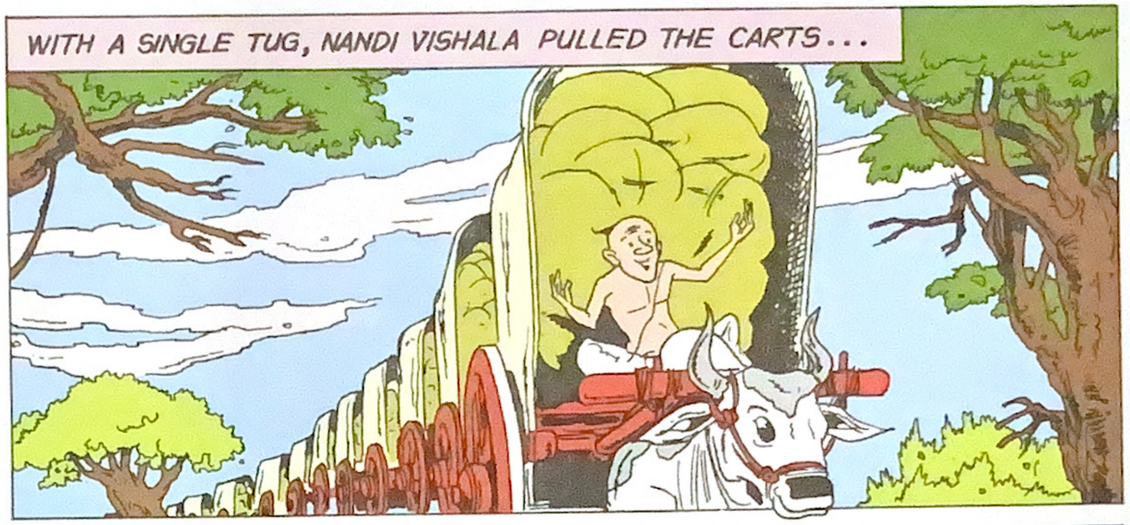
NO, NEVER, MY CHILD!

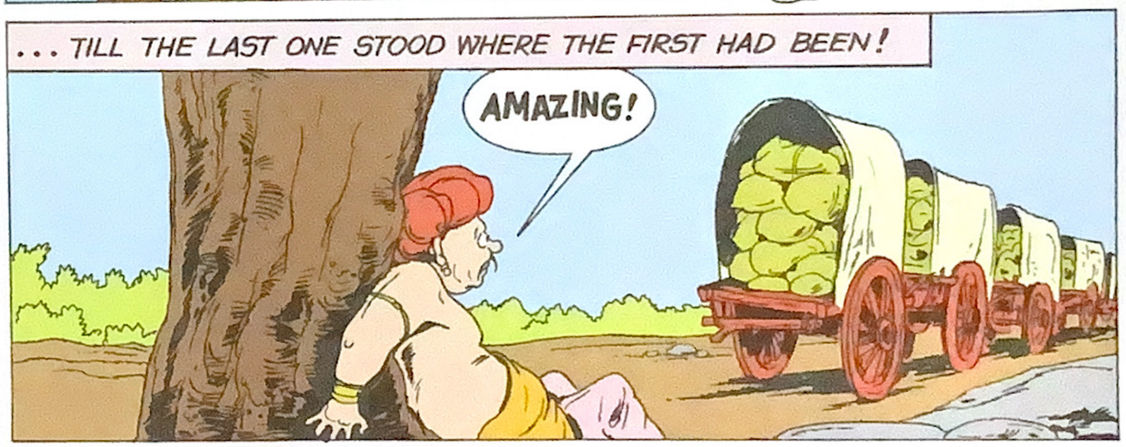

NANDI VISHALA IMMEDIATELY FELT SORRY FOR THE BRAHMAN.
ALL IS NOT YET LOST. GO AND MAKE THE WAGER AGAIN. LET THE STAKE BE 2000 PIECES OF GOLD THIS TIME. ONLY REMEMBER, DON'T EVER CALL ME A RASCAL AGAIN!

THE BRAHMAN WENT TO THE MERCHANT AND OFFERED TO MAKE THE SAME WAGER AS BEFORE —
THE MAN SEEMS TO BE A FOOL!
YOU ARE NOT CONTENT WITH LOSING A THOUSAND PIECES OF GOLD!

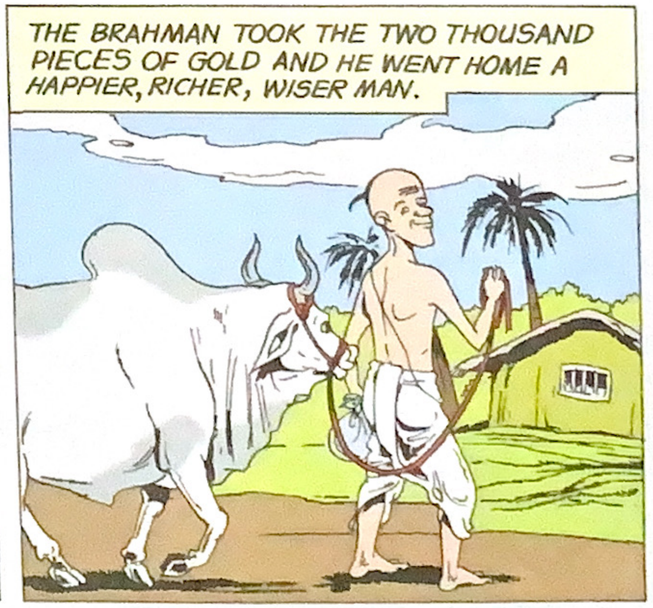

I AM SO CERTAIN OF WINNING THAT I'M WILLING TO BET TWO THOUSAND THIS TIME.
TWO THOUSAND! ALL RIGHT, I ACCEPT!


WHEN THE LOADED CARTS AND THE BULL WERE READY—
NOW THEN, MY FINE FELLOW! PULL THE CARTS ALONG.

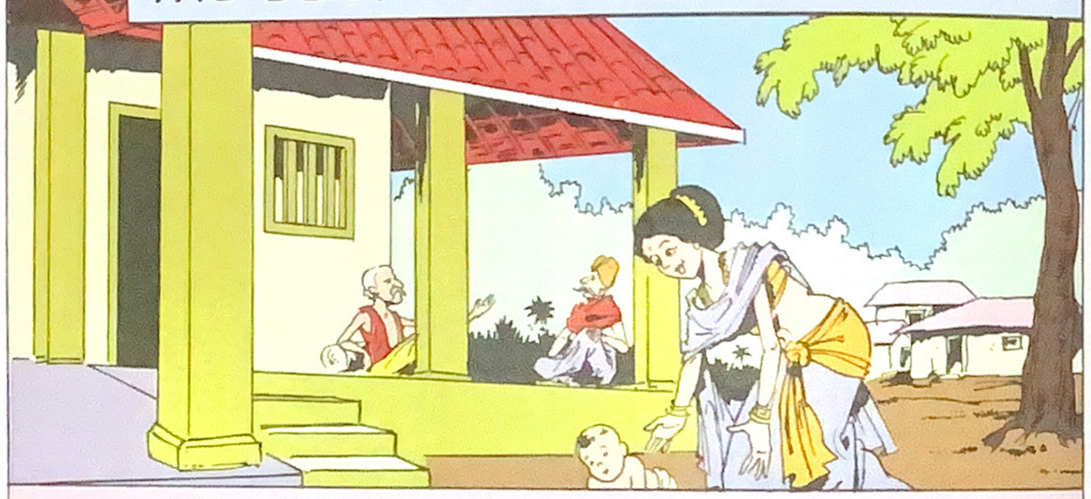

WITH A SINGLE TUG, NANDI VISHALA PULLED THE CARTS...


...TILL THE LAST ONE STOOD WHERE THE FIRST HAD BEEN!
AMAZING!

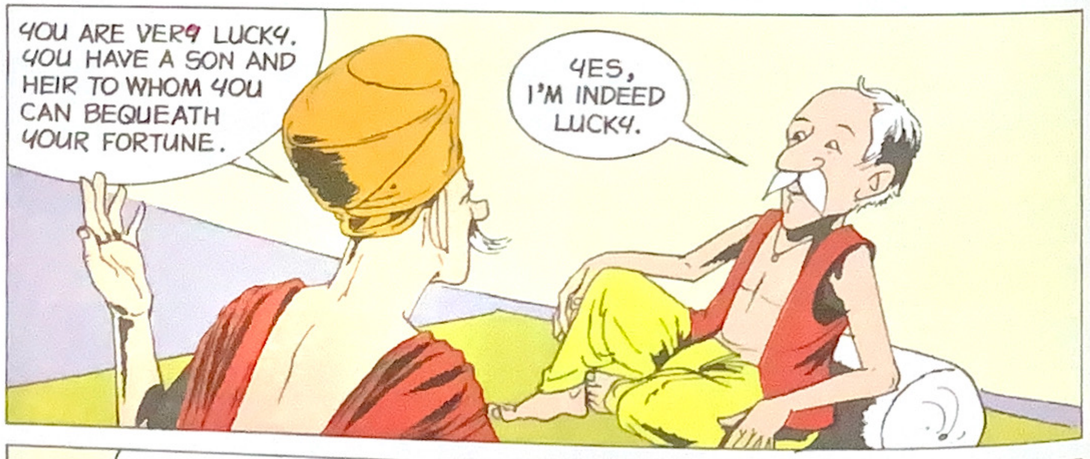
YOU DESERVE EVERY ONE OF THESE GOLD PIECES!

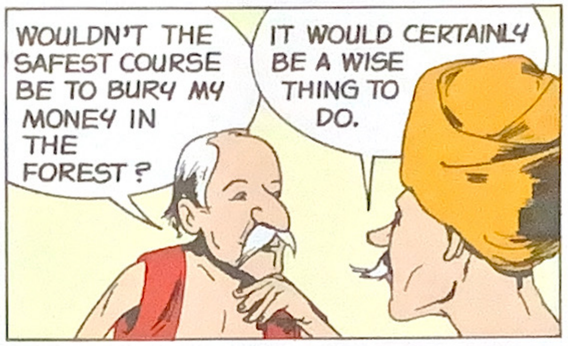

THE BRAHMAN TOOK THE TWO THOUSAND PIECES OF GOLD AND HE WENT HOME A HAPPIER, RICHER, WISER MAN.

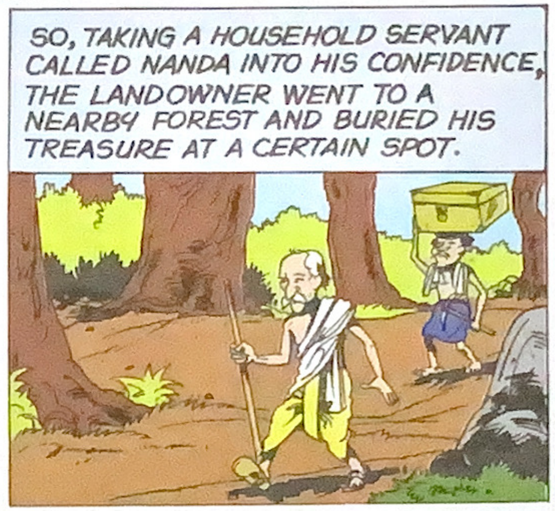
THE SERVANT AND THE TREASURE

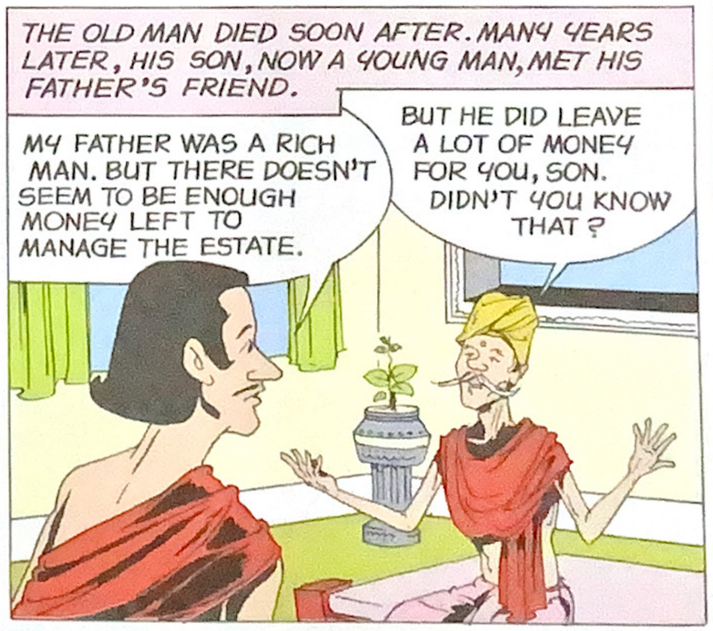


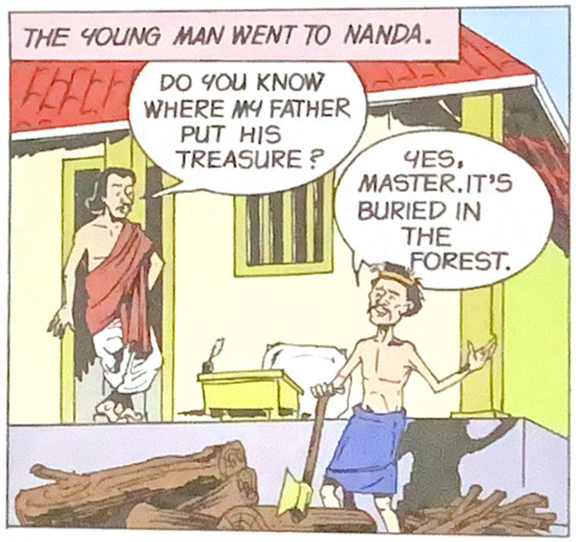
ONCE THERE WERE TWO OLD LANDOWNERS WHO WERE FRIENDS. ONE OF THEM HAD A VERY YOUNG WIFE WHO HAD RECENTLY BORNE HIM A SON.

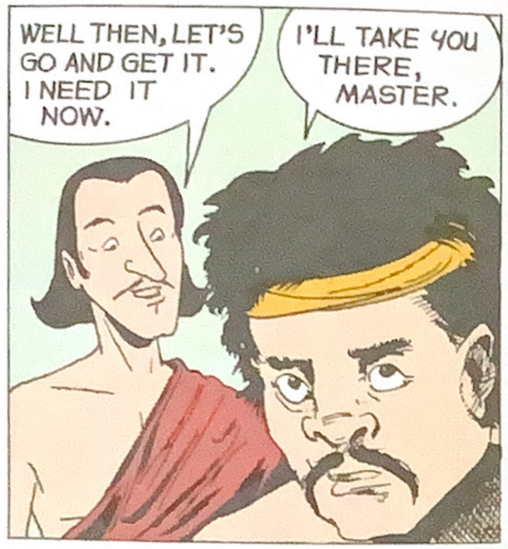


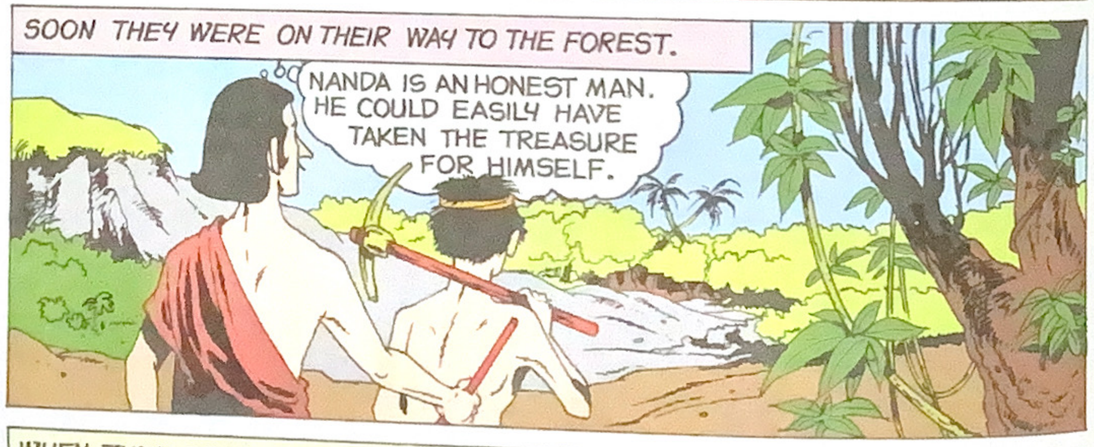


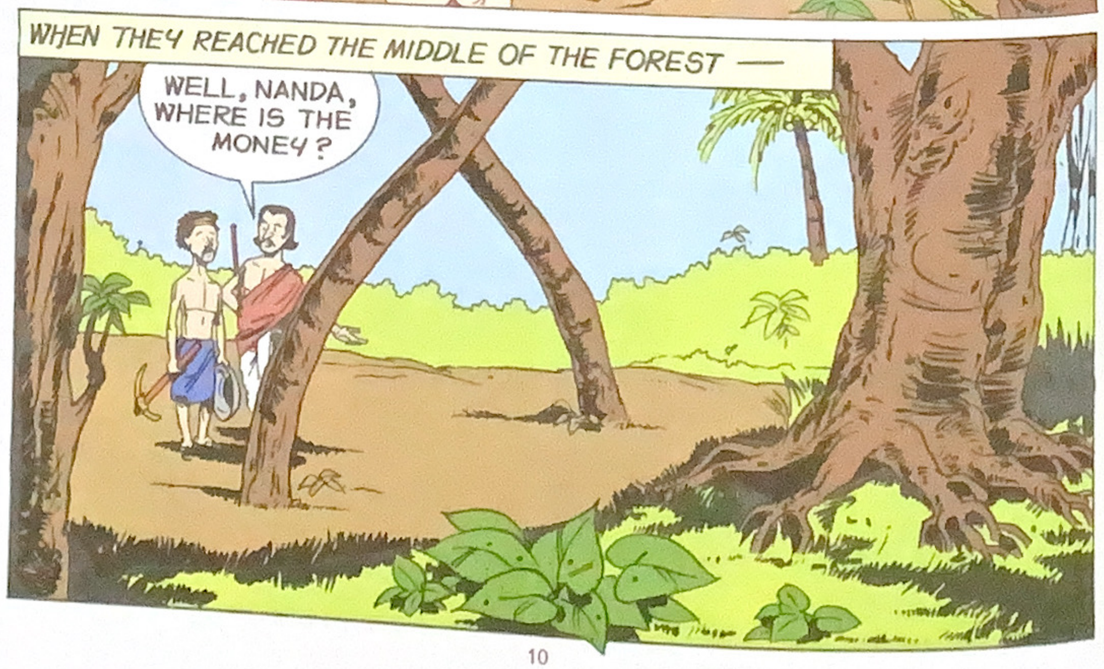


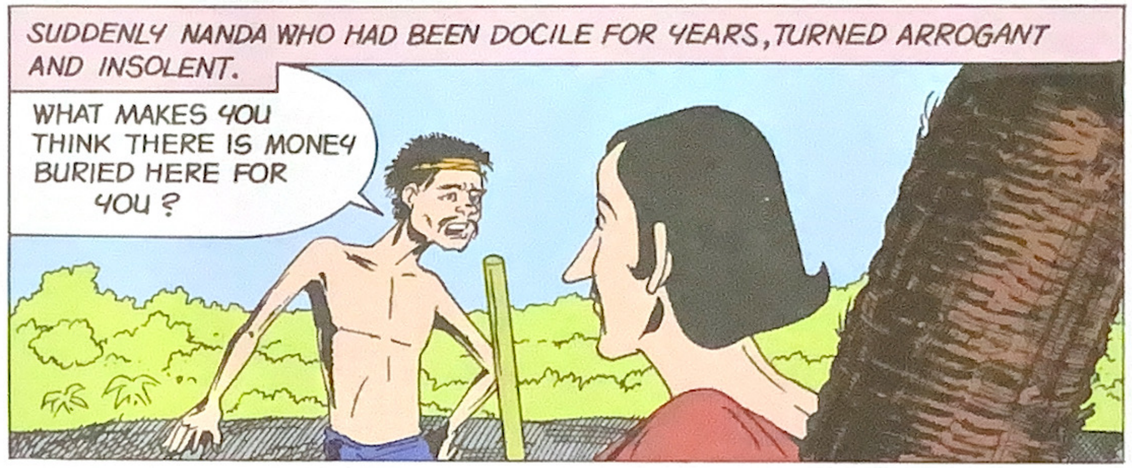


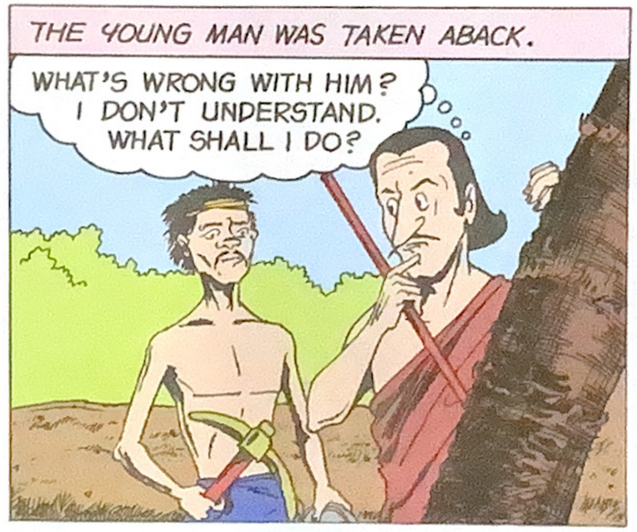

THE YOUNG MAN WENT TO NANDA.
DO YOU KNOW WHERE MY FATHER PUT HIS TREASURE?
YES, MASTER. IT'S BUIRED IN THE FOREST.

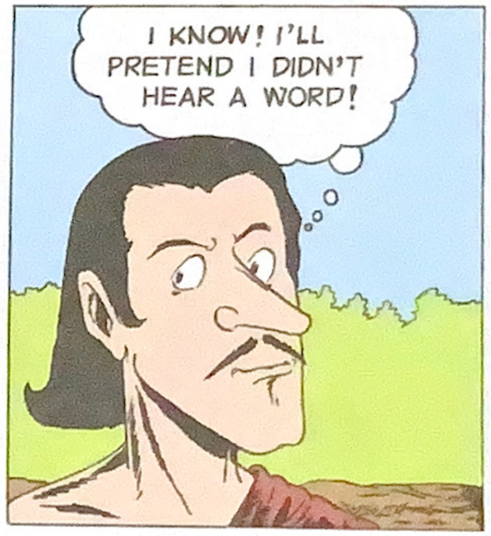

WELL THEN, LET'S GO AND GET IT. I NEED IT NOW.
I'LL TAKE YOU THERE, MASTER.

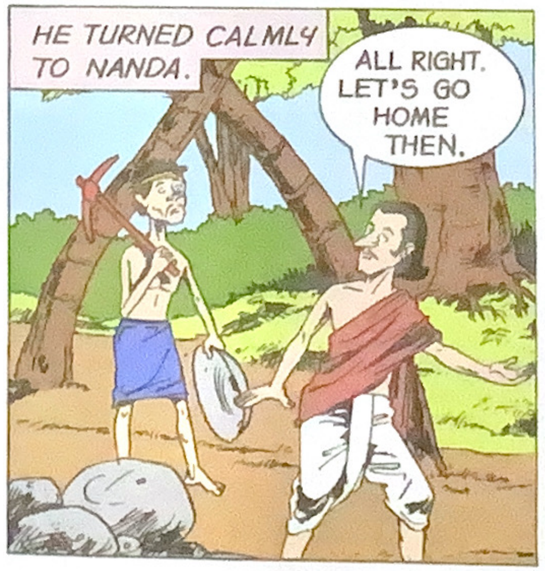

SOON THEY WERE ON THEIR WAY TO THE FOREST.
NANDA IS AN HONEST MAN. HE COULD EASILY HAVE TAKEN THE TREASURE FOR HIMSELF.

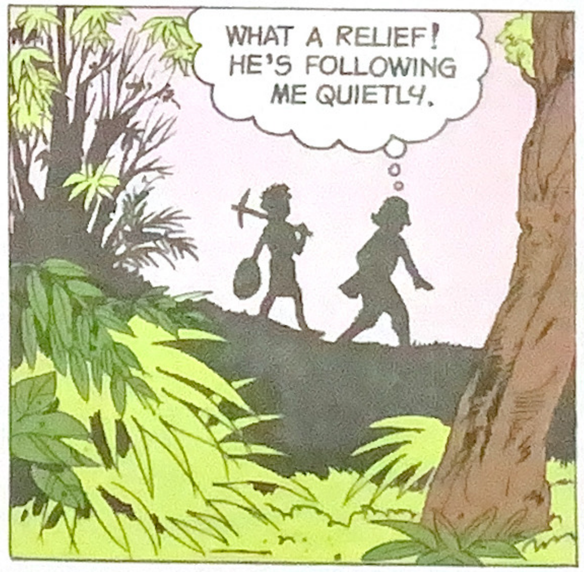

WHEN THEY REACHED THE MIDDLE OF THE FOREST —
WELL, NANDA, WHERE IS THE MONEY?

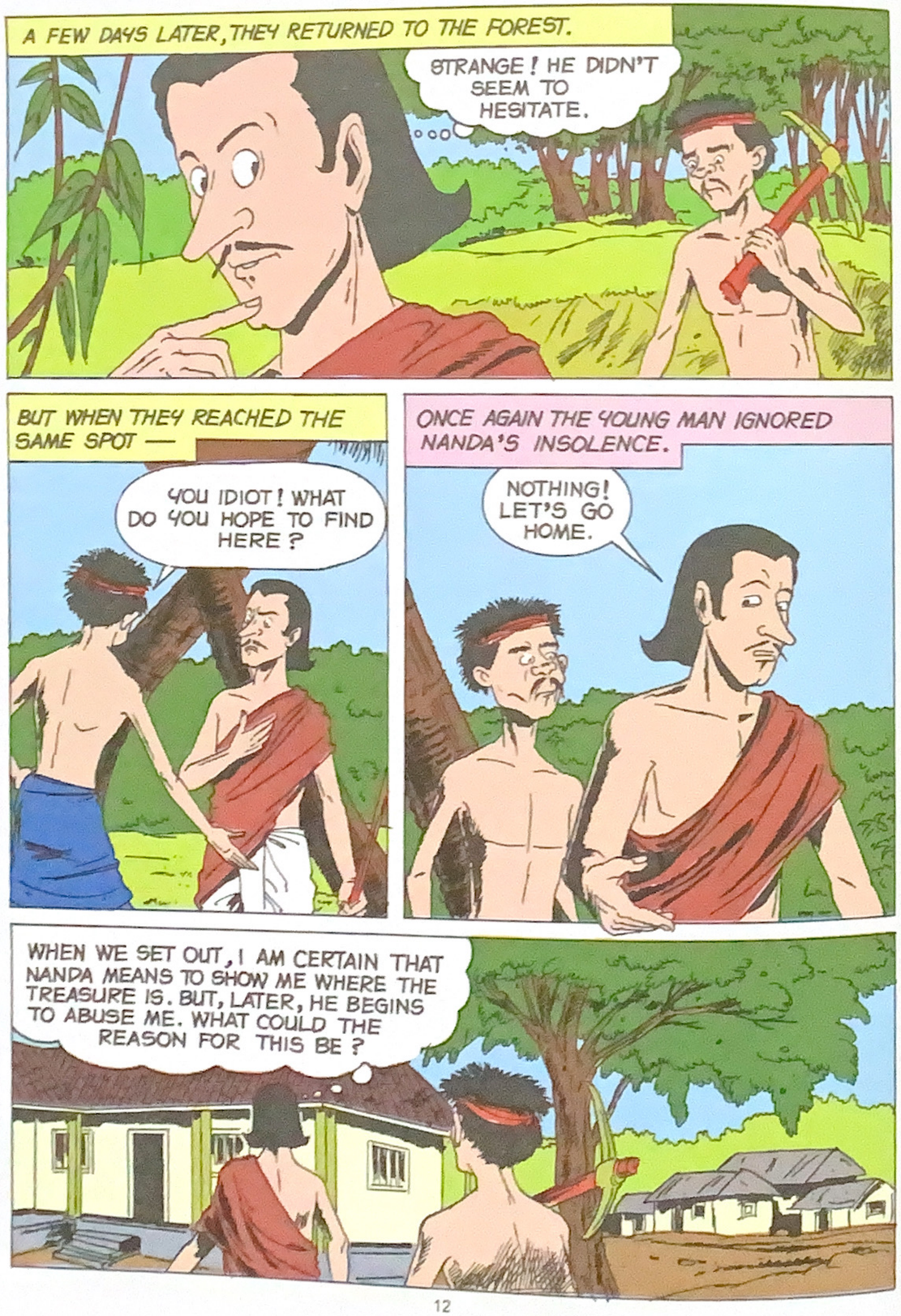

SUDDENLY NANDA WHO HAD BEEN DOCILE FOR YEARS, TURNED ARROGANT AND INSOLENT.
WHAT MAKES YOU THINK THERE IS MONEY BURIED HERE FOR YOU?


THE YOUNG MAN WAS TAKEN ABACK.
WHAT'S WRONG WITH HIM? I DON'T UNDERSTAND. WHAT SHALL I DO?


I KNOW! I'LL PRETEND I DIDN'T HEAR A WORD!

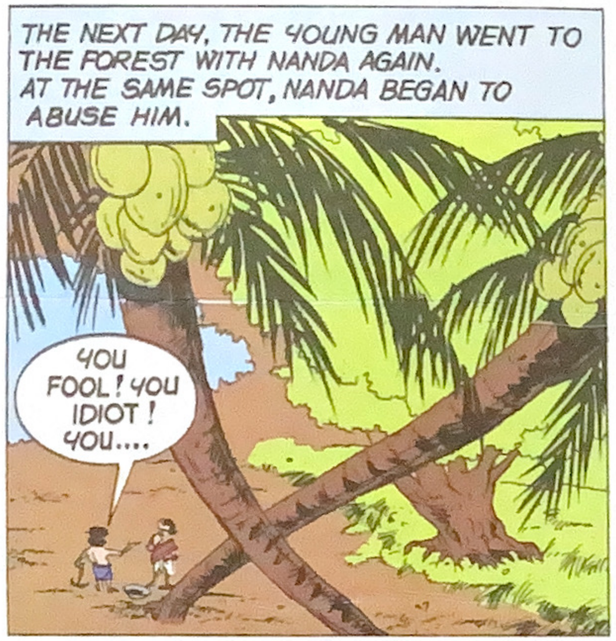

HE TURNED CALMLY TO NANDA.
ALL RIGHT. LET'S GO HOME THEN.

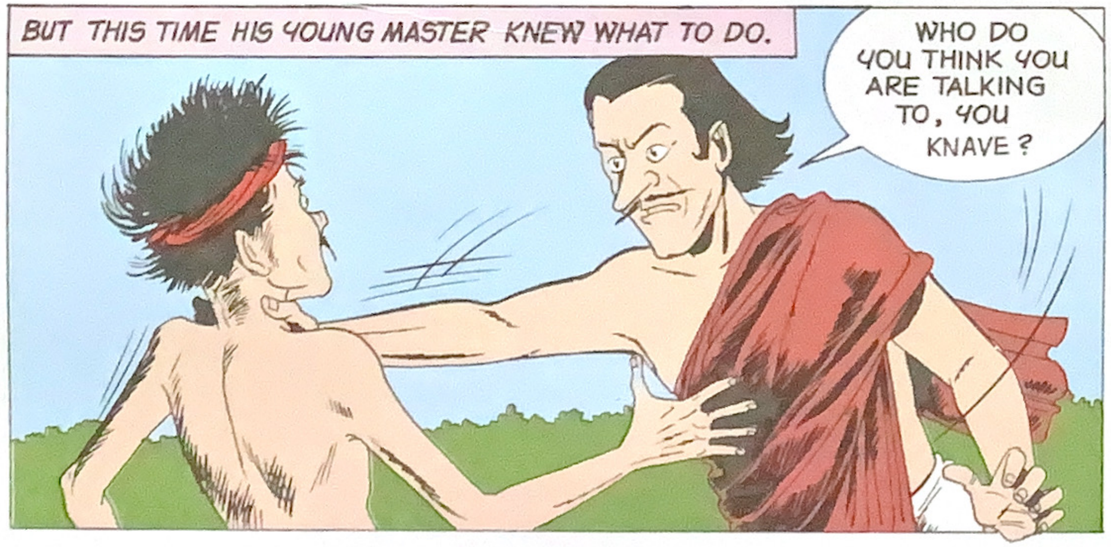

WHAT A RELIEF! HE'S FOLLOWING ME QUIETLY.

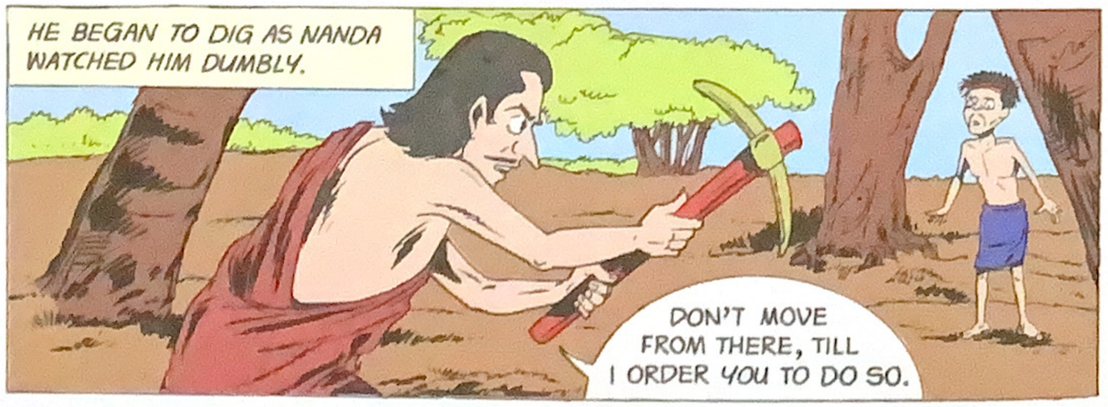

A FEW DAYS LATER, THEY RETURNED TO THE FOREST.
STRANGE! HE DIDN'T SEEM TO HESITATE.
BUT WHEN THEY REACHED THE SAME SPOT —
YOU IDIOT! WHAT DO YOU HOPE TO FIND HERE?
ONCE AGAIN THE YOUNG MAN IGNORED NANDA'S INSOLENCE.
NOTHING! LET'S GO HOME.
WHEN WE SET OUT, I AM CERTAIN THAT NANDA MEANS TO SHOW ME WHERE THE TREASURE IS. BUT, LATER, HE BEGINS TO ABUSE ME. WHAT COULD THE REASON FOR THIS BE?

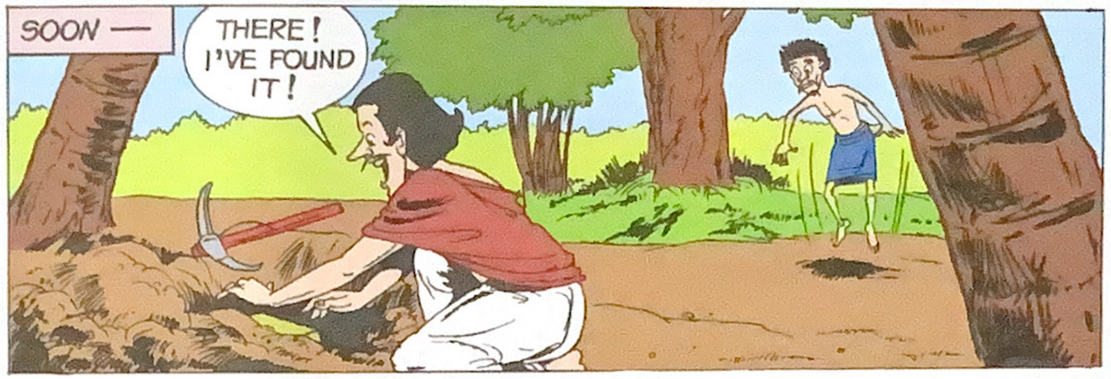
MY FATHER'S WISE OLD FRIEND SHOULD BE ABLE TO HELP.
SO HE WENT TO THE OLD MAN AND DESCRIBED NANDA'S STRANGE BEHAVIOUR.
IT'S SIMPLE! YOU SAY HE STARTS ABUSING YOU WHEN YOU REACH A PARTICULAR SPOT IN THE FOREST? THEN THAT'S WHERE THE TREASURE IS BURIED!
HOW DO YOU KNOW?
MONEY CAN CORRUPT EVEN AN HONEST MAN. THE MOMENT NANDA STANDS ON THE SPOT WHERE THE TREASURE IS BURIED, HE BECOMES A DIFFERENT MAN.
IF THAT IS SO, WHY DIDN'T HE TAKE IT FOR HIMSELF?
BECAUSE HE DIDN'T DARE!

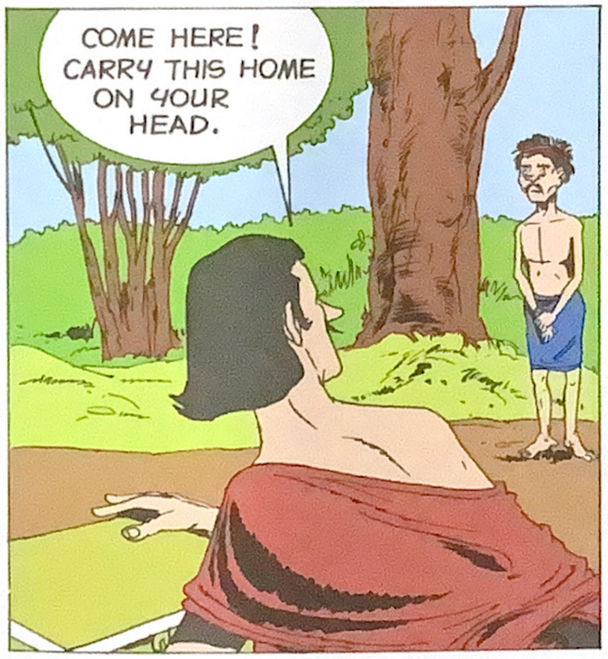
WHAT SHOULD I DO NOW ?
GO BACK TO THE FOREST WITH HIM AND WHEN HE STARTS SHOUTING, YOU....
AND THE OLD MAN TOLD THE YOUNG ONE WHAT HE SHOULD DO.

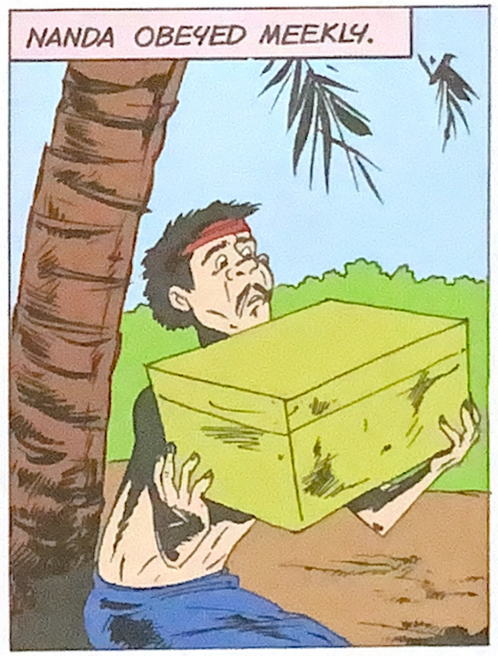

THE NEXT DAY, THE YOUNG MAN WENT TO THE FOREST WITH NANDA AGAIN. AT THE SAME SPOT, NANDA BEGAN TO ABUSE HIM.
YOU FOOL! YOU IDIOT! YOU....

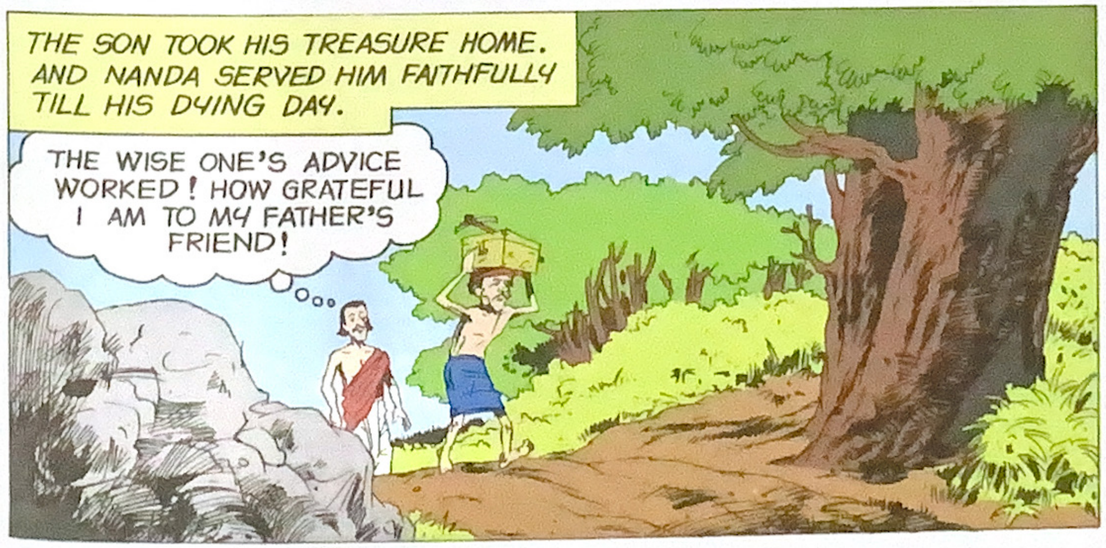

BUT THIS TIME HIS YOUNG MASTER KNEW WHAT TO DO.
WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE TALKING TO, YOU KNAVE ?


HE BEGAN TO DIG AS NANDA WATCHED HIM DUMBLY.
DON'T MOVE FROM THERE, TILL I ORDER YOU TO DO SO.


SOON —
THERE! I'VE FOUND IT!


COME HERE! CARRY THIS HOME ON YOUR HEAD.


NANDA OBEYED MEEKLY.


THE SON TOOK HIS TREASURE HOME. AND NANDA SERVED HIM FAITHFULLY TILL HIS DYING DAY.
THE WISE ONE'S ADVICE WORKED! HOW GRATEFUL I AM TO MY FATHER'S FRIEND!

THE HYPOCRITICAL SADHU

A RASCAL OF A SADHU LIVED IN A FOREST HERMITAGE ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF A VILLAGE AND HAD WON THE TRUST OF A ZAMINDAR.

NOW, THE ZAMINDAR HAD SOME GOLD WHICH HE WANTED TO HIDE FROM ROBBERS. AS HE WONDERED WHERE TO PUT IT —

I KNOW WHAT! THE SADHU IS A MODEL OF GOODNESS... AND DACOITS WOULD NEVER ATTACK A HERMITAGE!

SO HE WENT WITH HIS GOLD TO THE HERMITAGE.

HOLY SIR! WE ZAMINDARS LIVE IN CONSTANT FEAR OF ROBBERS. SO I AM GOING TO BURY MY GOLD RIGHT HERE IN YOUR HERMITAGE.

THERE'S ENOUGH GOLD THERE TO KEEP ME HAPPY FOR THE REST OF MY LIFE!

I AM LEAVING MY GOLD BURIED HERE AS I HAVE COMPLETE FAITH IN YOU. PLEASE DON'T LET ME DOWN.

IT'S NOT NECESSARY TO TELL ME THAT. WE, WHO HAVE GIVEN UP THE WORLD, NEVER COVET ANOTHER'S PROPERTY!

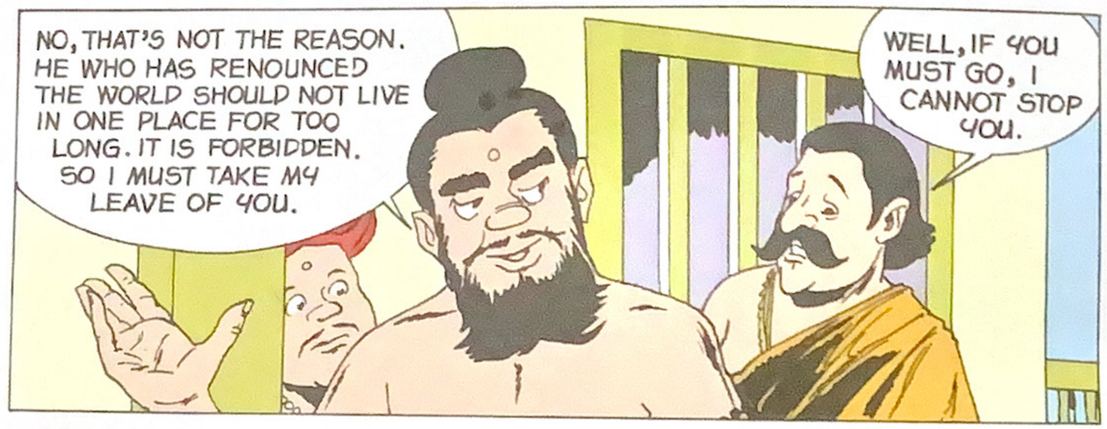
A FEW DAYS LATER, THE RASCAL REMOVED THE GOLD AND BURIED IT AGAIN AT ANOTHER SPOT A SHORT DISTANCE AWAY.

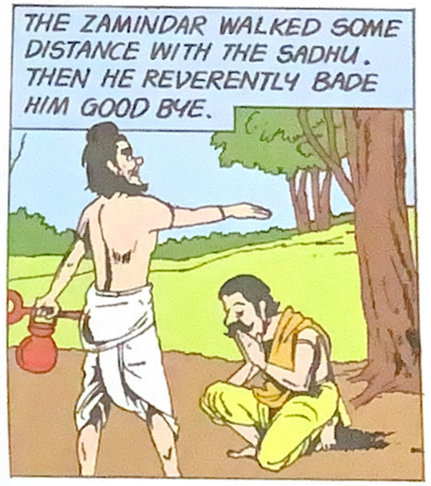
TOMORROW I SHALL GO AND TAKE MY LEAVE OF THE ZAMINDAR.

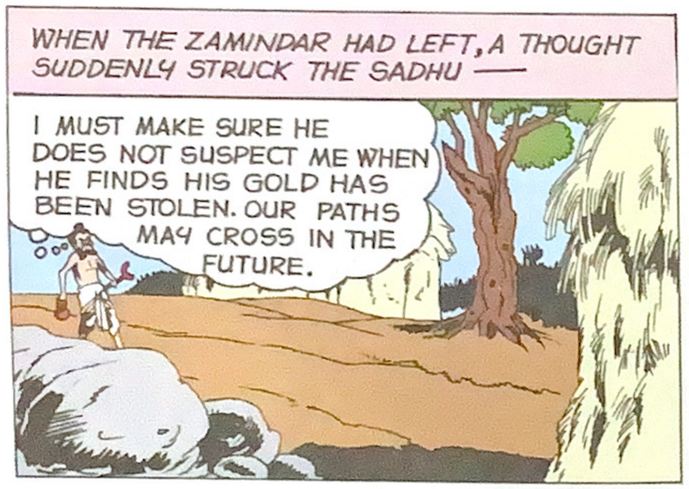
THE NEXT DAY —

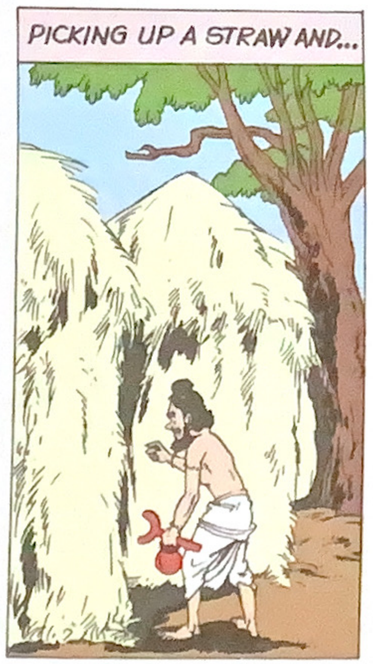
I HAVE DECIDED TO GO AWAY FROM HERE.

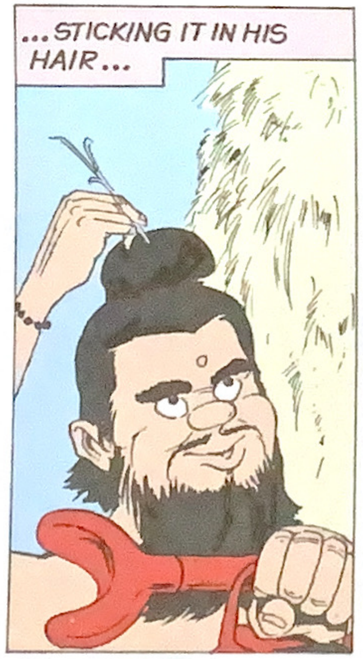
WHAT'S THE MATTER? HAVE I DISPLEASED YOU IN ANY WAY?

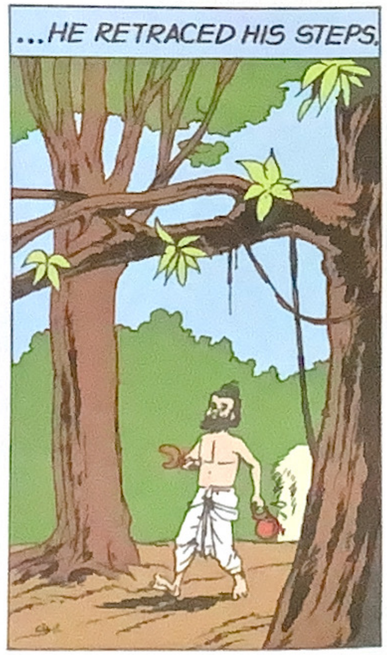

NO, THAT'S NOT THE REASON. HE WHO HAS RENOUNCED THE WORLD SHOULD NOT LIVE IN ONE PLACE FOR TOO LONG. IT IS FORBIDDEN. SO I MUST TAKE MY LEAVE OF YOU.
WELL, IF YOU MUST GO, I CANNOT STOP YOU.

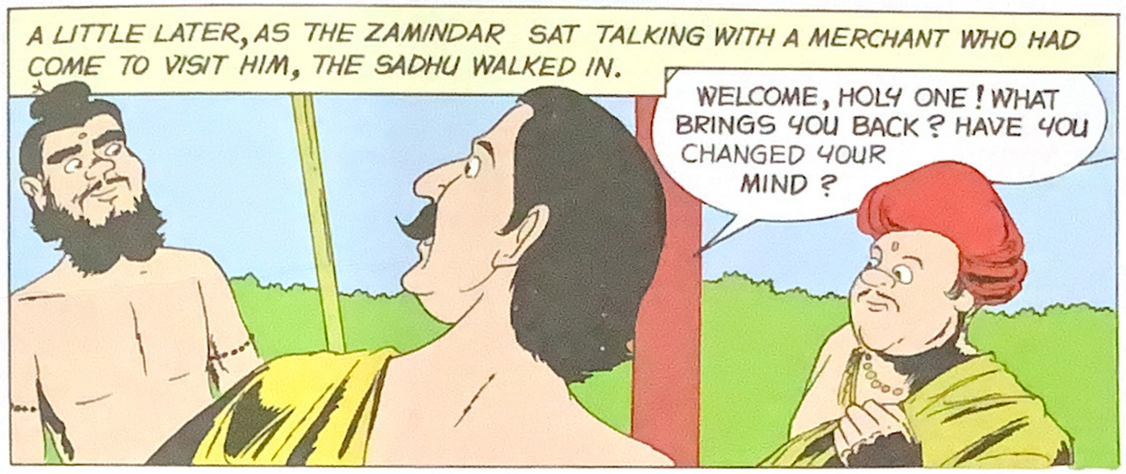

THE ZAMINDAR WALKED SOME DISTANCE WITH THE SADHU. THEN HE REVERENTLY BADE HIM GOOD BYE.

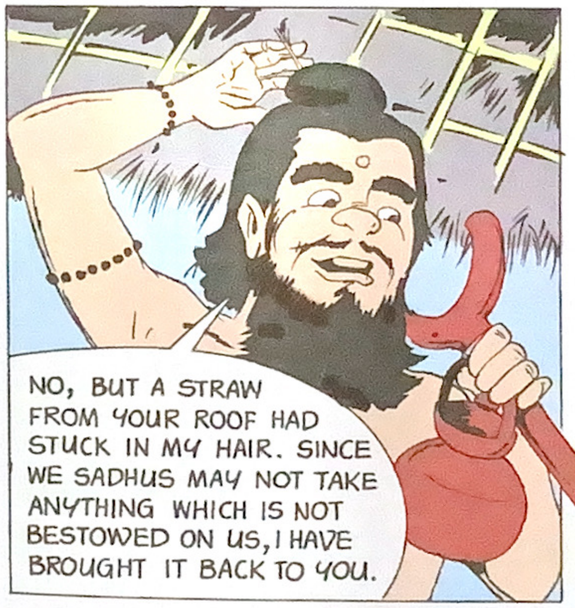

WHEN THE ZAMINDAR HAD LEFT, A THOUGHT SUDDENLY STRUCK THE SADHU —
I MUST MAKE SURE HE DOES NOT SUSPECT ME WHEN HE FINDS HIS GOLD HAS BEEN STOLEN. OUR PATHS MAY CROSS IN THE FUTURE.


PICKING UP A STRAW AND...

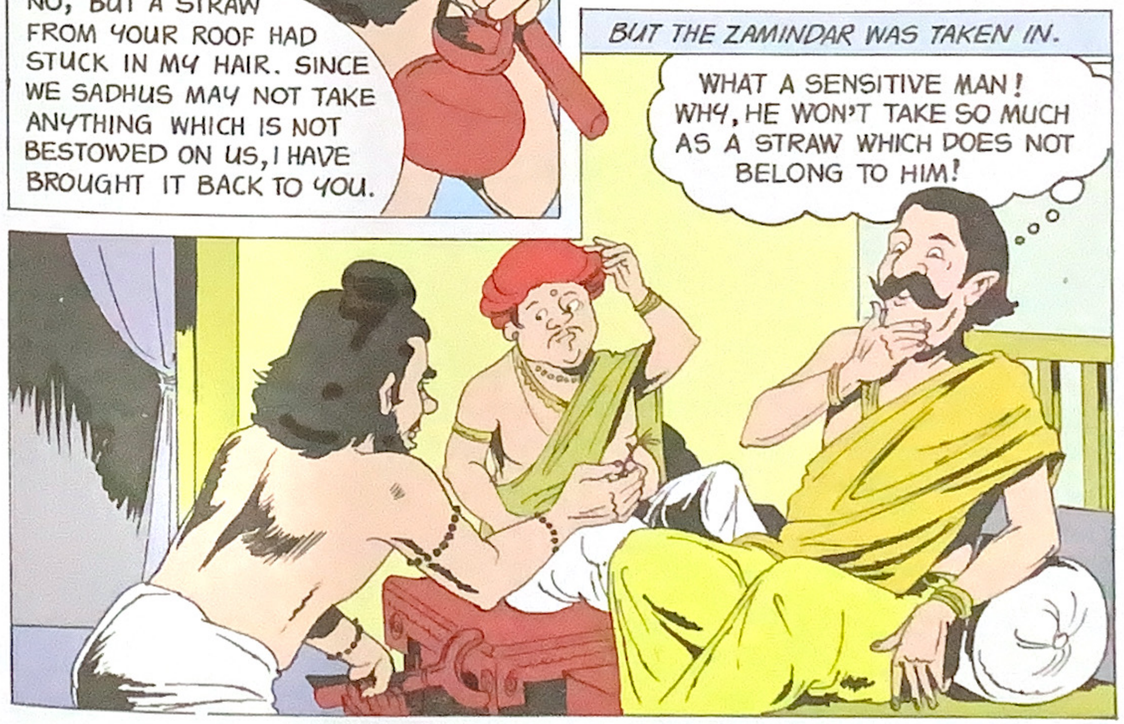

...STICKING IT IN HIS HAIR...

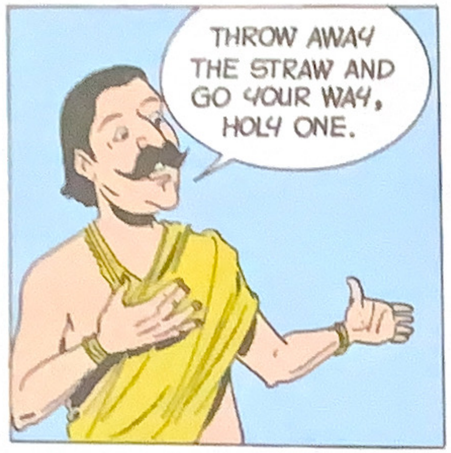

...HE RETRACED HIS STEPS.

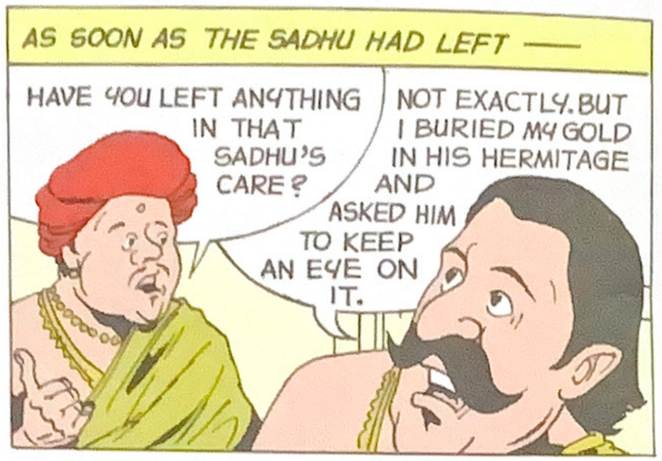

A LITTLE LATER, AS THE ZAMINDAR SAT TALKING WITH A MERCHANT WHO HAD COME TO VISIT HIM, THE SADHU WALKED IN.
WELCOME, HOLY ONE! WHAT BRINGS YOU BACK? HAVE YOU CHANGED YOUR MIND?


NO, BUT A STRAW FROM YOUR ROOF HAD STUCK IN MY HAIR. SINCE WE SADHUS MAY NOT TAKE ANYTHING WHICH IS NOT BESTOWED ON US, I HAVE BROUGHT IT BACK TO YOU.

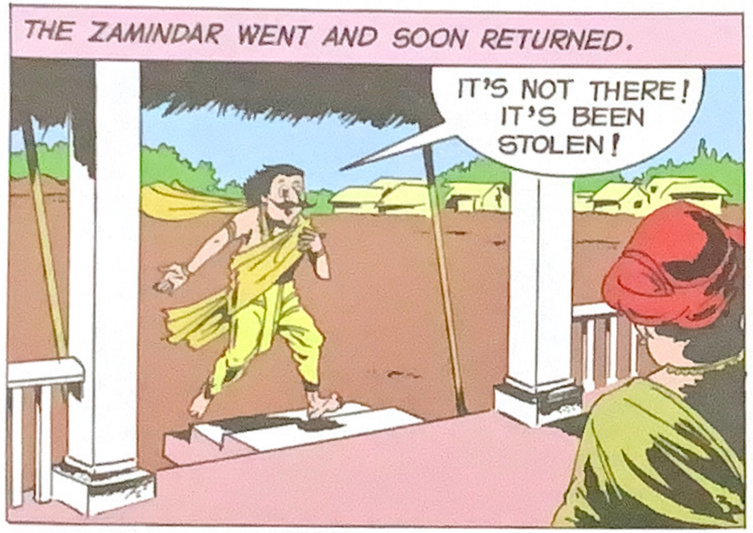
THE MERCHANT, HOWEVER, WAS A SHREWD MAN.
COME TO RETURN A STRAW INDEED! THIS FELLOW HAS ROBBED THE ZAMINDAR OF SOMETHING, I AM CERTAIN!

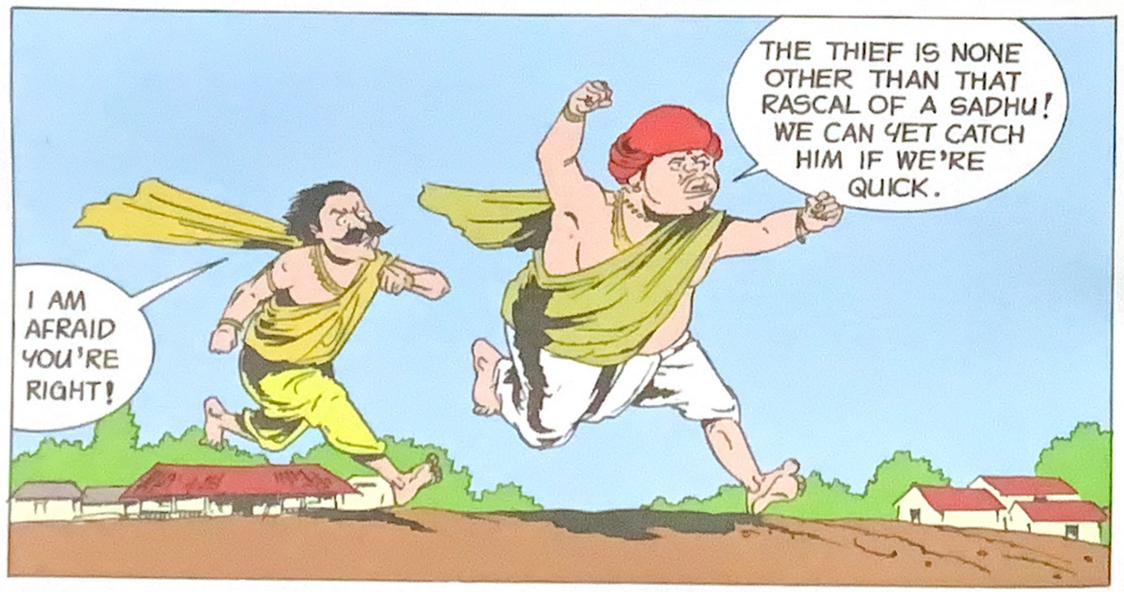

BUT THE ZAMINDAR WAS TAKEN IN.
WHAT A SENSITIVE MAN! WHY, HE WON'T TAKE SO MUCH AS A STRAW WHICH DOES NOT BELONG TO HIM!

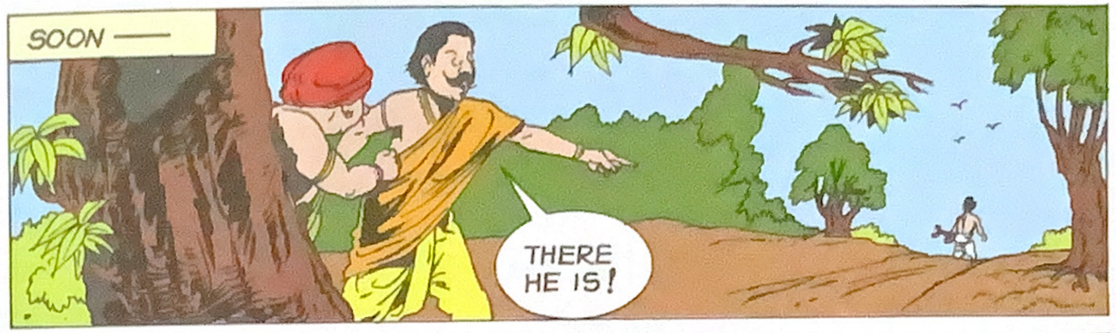

THROW AWAY THE STRAW AND GO YOUR WAY, HOLY ONE.

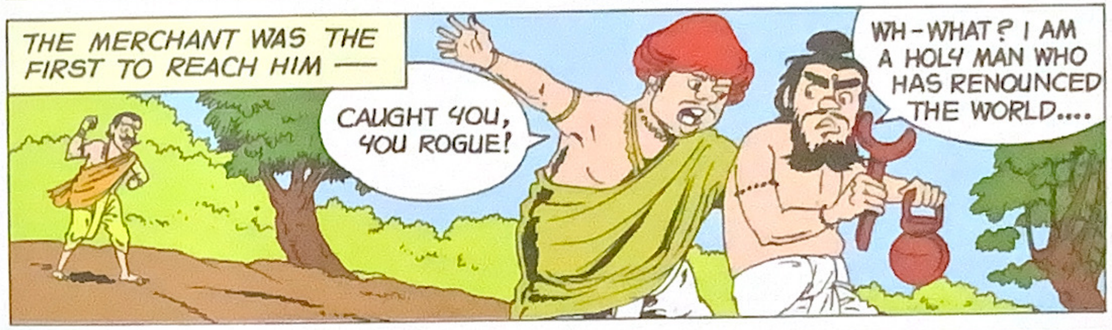

AS SOON AS THE SADHU HAD LEFT —
HAVE YOU LEFT ANYTHING IN THAT SADHU'S CARE?
NOT EXACTLY. BUT I BURIED MY GOLD IN HIS HERMITAGE AND ASKED HIM TO KEEP AN EYE ON IT.

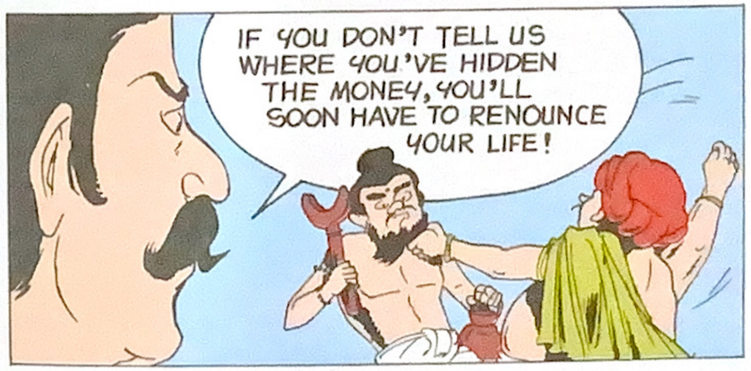
WELL, JUST GO AND SEE IF IT IS STILL THERE.


THE ZAMINDAR WENT AND SOON RETURNED.
IT'S NOT THERE! IT'S BEEN STOLEN!

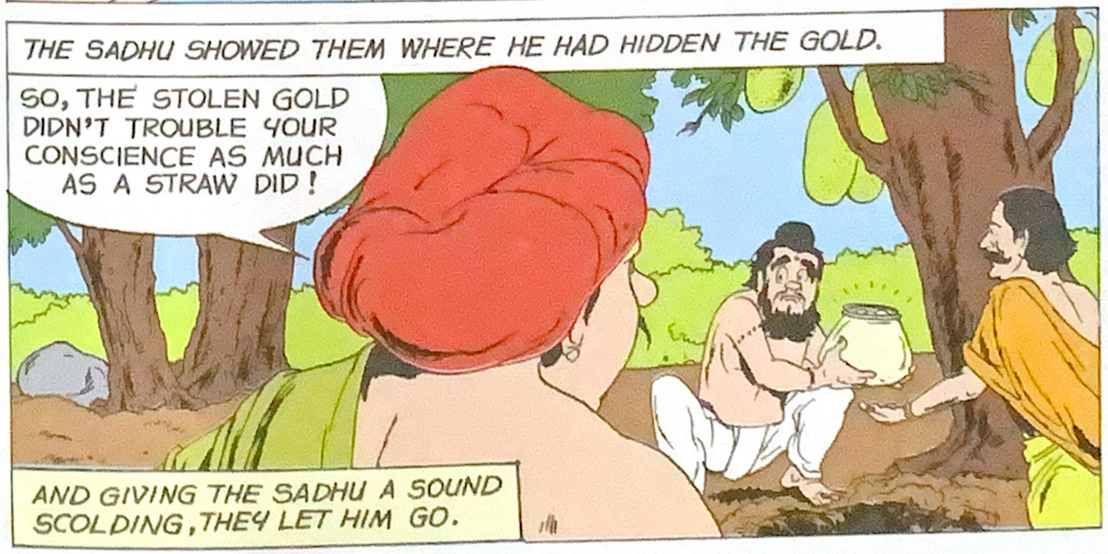

THE THIEF IS NONE OTHER THAN THAT RASCAL OF A SADHU! WE CAN YET CATCH HIM IF WE'RE QUICK.
I AM AFRAID YOU'RE RIGHT!

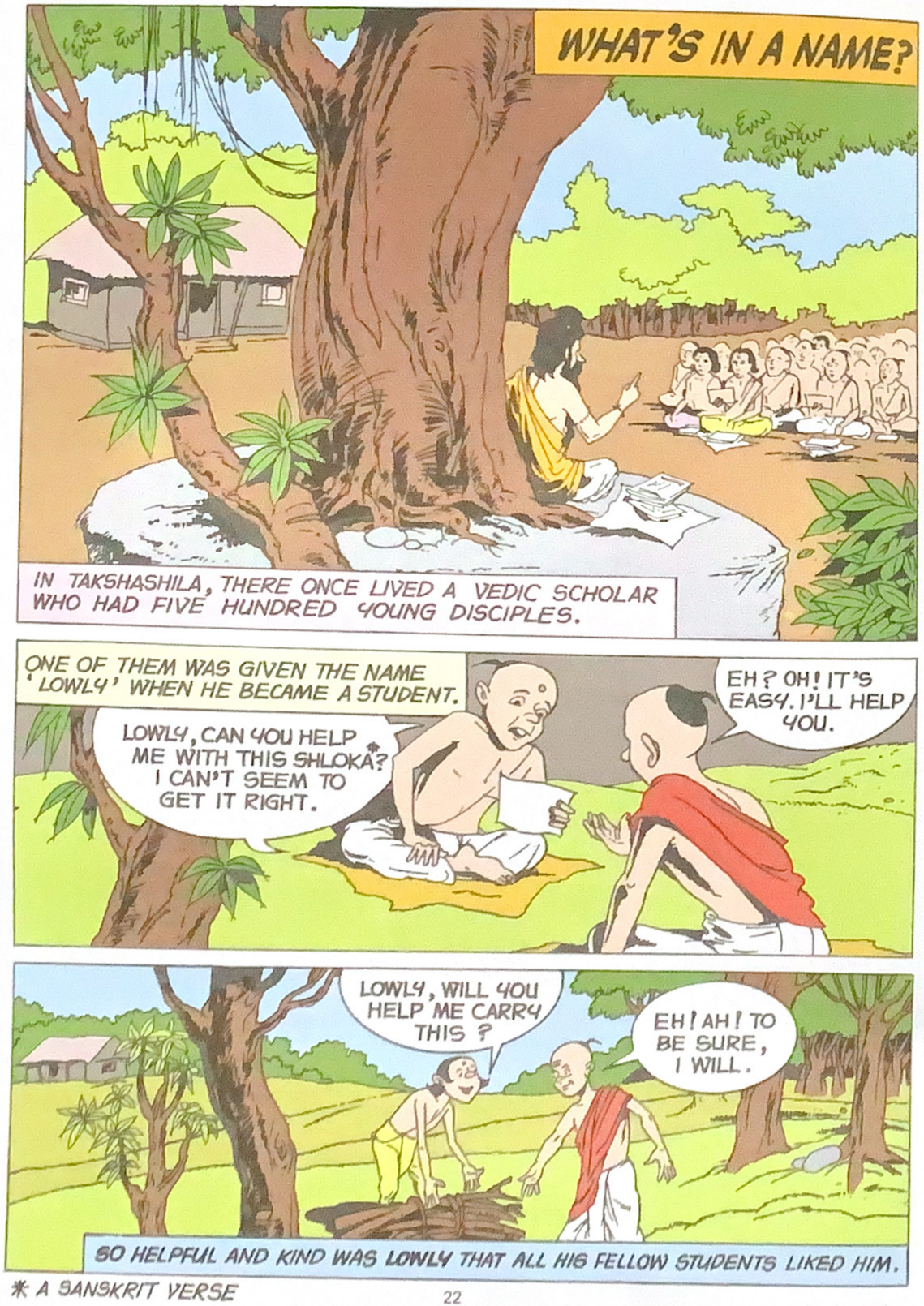

SOON —
THERE HE IS!


THE MERCHANT WAS THE FIRST TO REACH HIM —
CAUGHT YOU, YOU ROGUE!
WH-WHAT? I AM A HOLY MAN WHO HAS RENOUNCED THE WORLD....

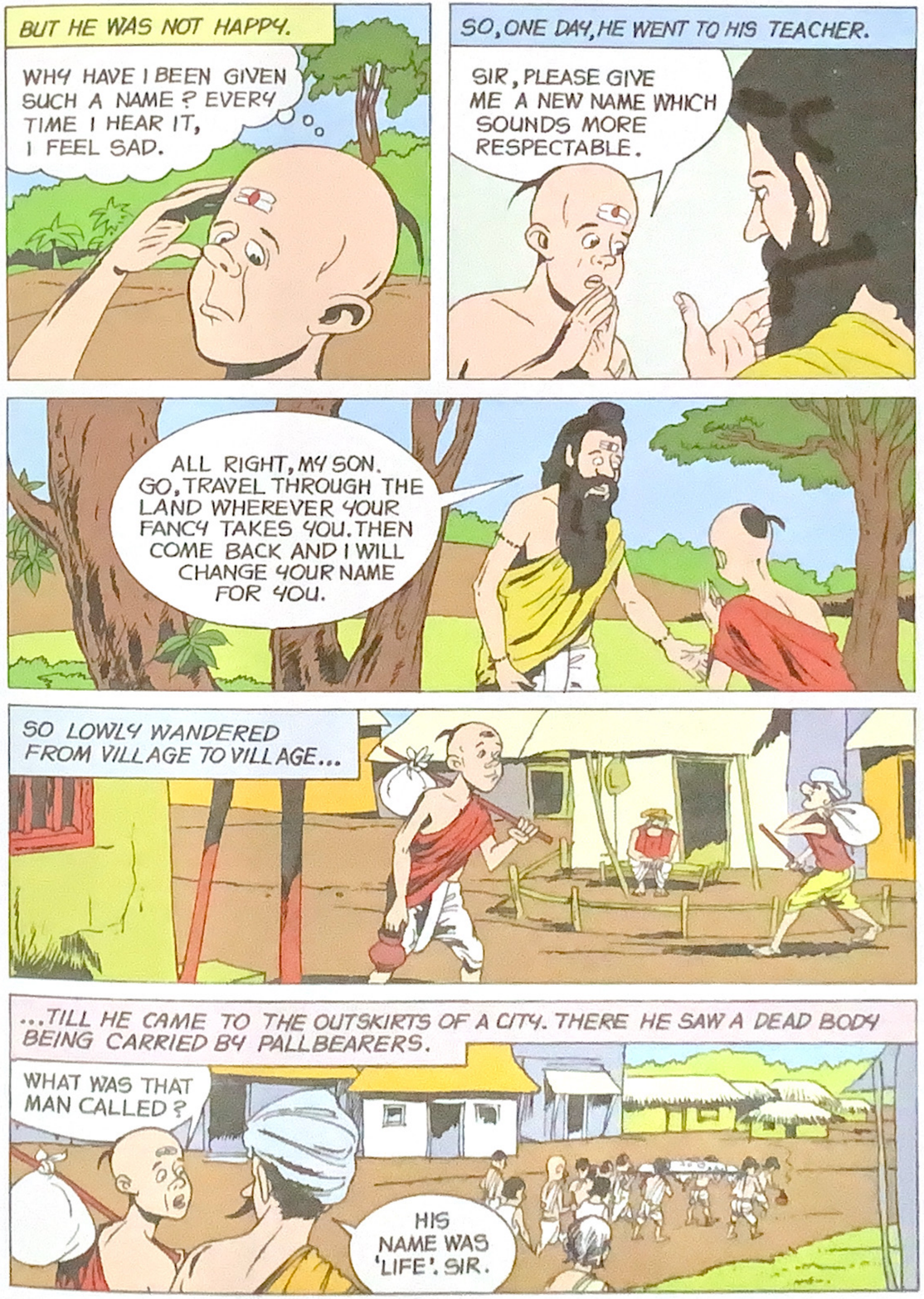

IF YOU DON'T TELL US WHERE YOU'VE HIDDEN THE MONEY, YOU'LL SOON HAVE TO RENOUNCE YOUR LIFE!

MERCY, MERCY! I'LL TELL YOU WHERE IT IS!

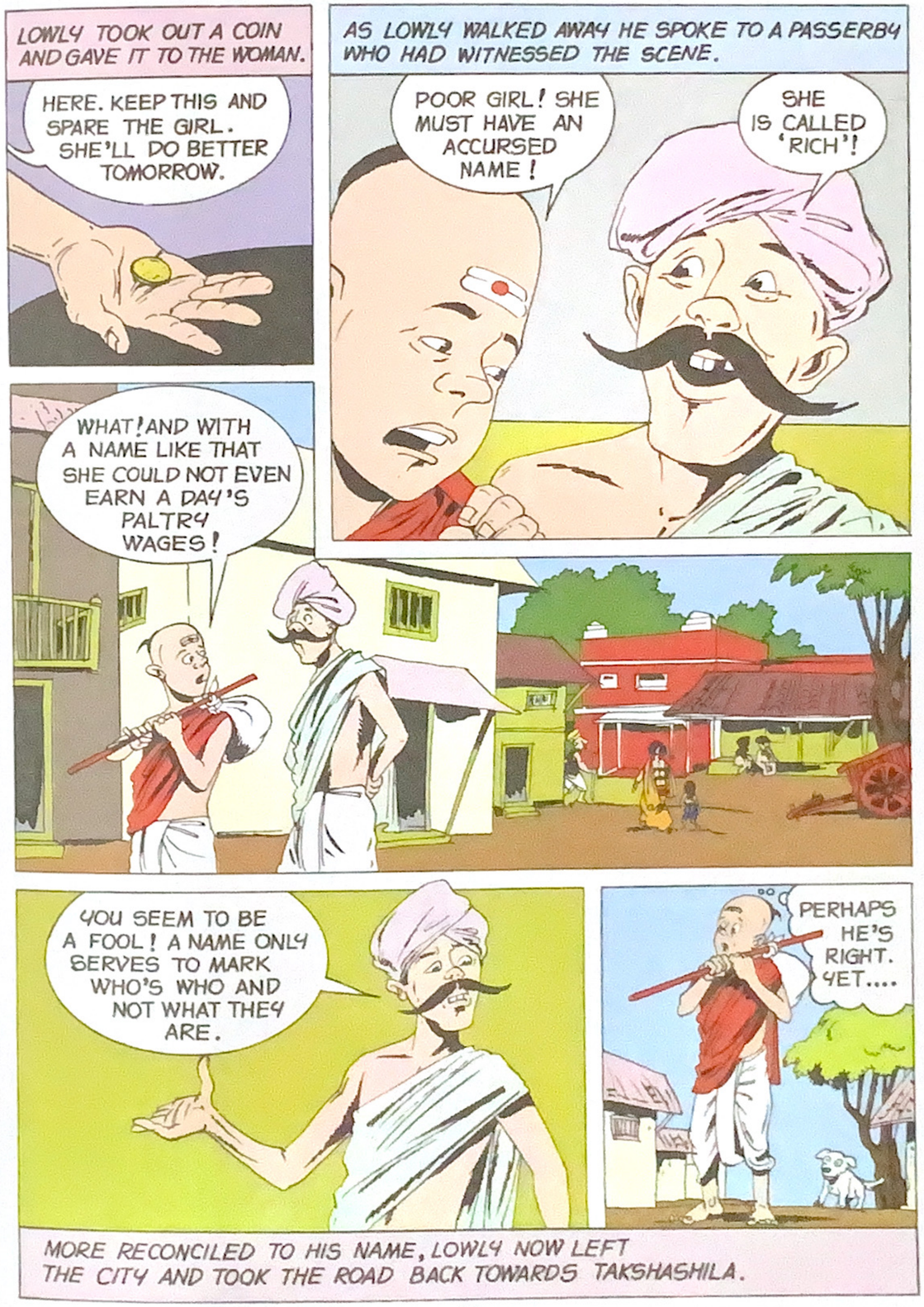

THE SADHU SHOWED THEM WHERE HE HAD HIDDEN THE GOLD.
SO, THE STOLEN GOLD DIDN'T TROUBLE YOUR CONSCIENCE AS MUCH AS A STRAW DID!
AND GIVING THE SADHU A SOUND SCOLDING, THEY LET HIM GO.

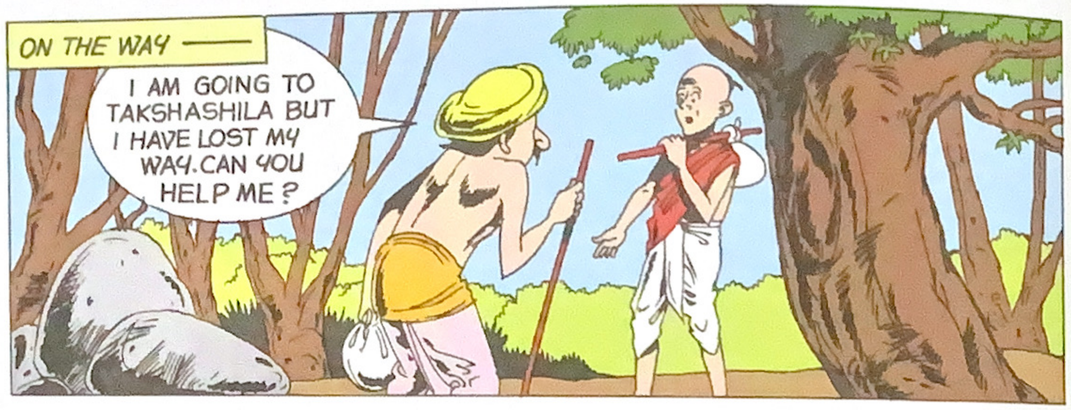


* A SANSKRIT VERSE

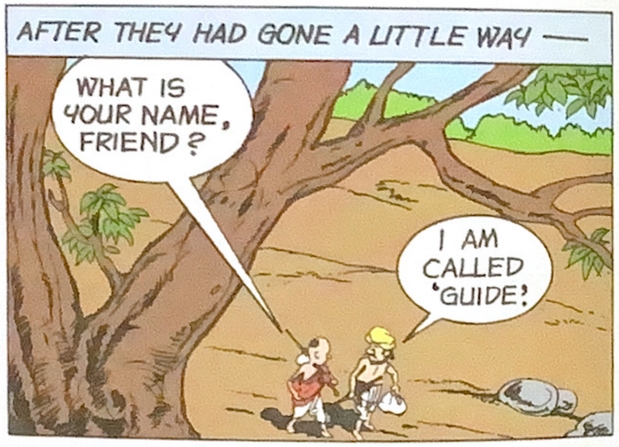


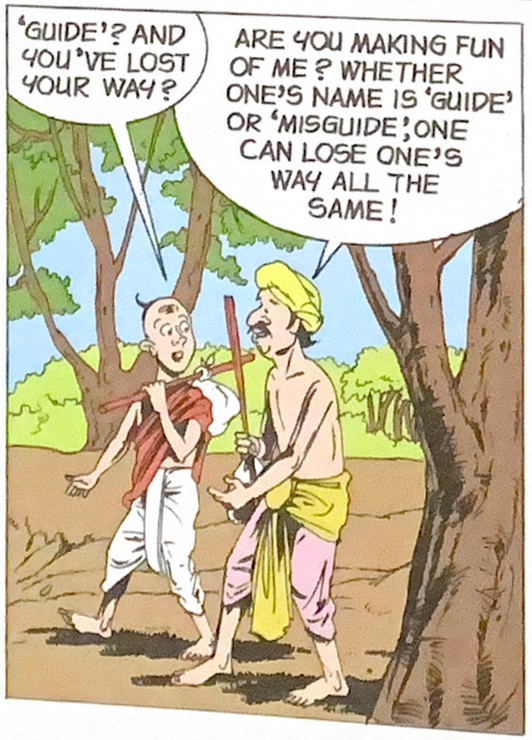
WHAT? CAN 'LIFE' BE DEAD?
WHY NOT? WHETHER HE WAS CALLED 'LIFE' OR 'DEATH', HE WOULD HAVE HAD TO DIE ALL THE SAME! A NAME ONLY SERVES TO MARK WHO'S WHO! YOU SEEM TO BE A FOOL!
PONDERING OVER THE MATTER, LOWLY ENTERED THE CITY.
SUDDENLY—
MERCY! MERCY, MY MISTRESS! I'LL TRY AND DO BETTER TOMORROW.
MOVED BY THE SIGHT, KIND LOWLY INTERVENED.
WAIT, MY GOOD WOMAN! WHY DO YOU WHIP THE POOR GIRL?
SHE IS MY SLAVE. I SENT HER OUT TO EARN MONEY AND SHE HAS COME BACK EMPTY-HANDED!

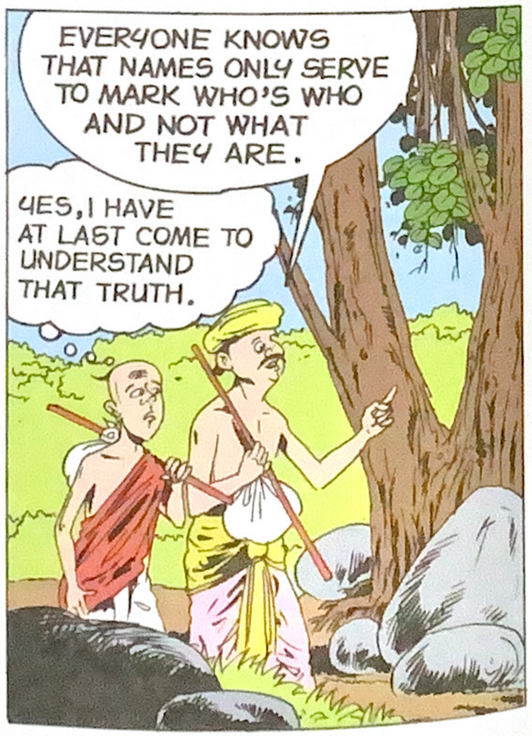

LOWLY TOOK OUT A COIN AND GAVE IT TO THE WOMAN.
HERE. KEEP THIS AND SPARE THE GIRL. SHE'LL DO BETTER TOMORROW.
AS LOWLY WALKED AWAY HE SPOKE TO A PASSERBY WHO HAD WITNESSED THE SCENE.
POOR GIRL! SHE MUST HAVE AN ACCURSED NAME!
SHE IS CALLED 'RICH'!
WHAT! AND WITH A NAME LIKE THAT SHE COULD NOT EVEN EARN A DAY'S PALTRY WAGES!
YOU SEEM TO BE A FOOL! A NAME ONLY SERVES TO MARK WHO'S WHO AND NOT WHAT THEY ARE.
PERHAPS HE'S RIGHT. YET....
MORE RECONCILED TO HIS NAME, LOWLY NOW LEFT THE CITY AND TOOK THE ROAD BACK TOWARDS TAKSHASHILA.

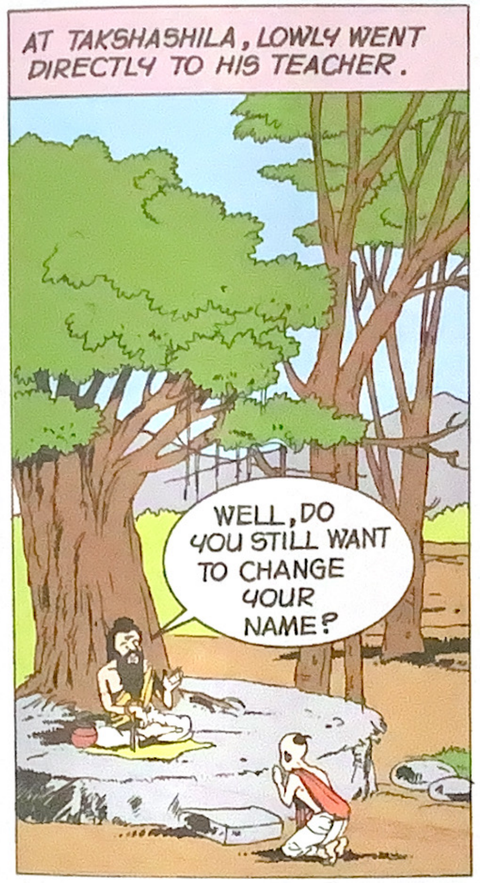

ON THE WAY —
I AM GOING TO TAKSHASHILA BUT I HAVE LOST MY WAY. CAN YOU HELP ME?

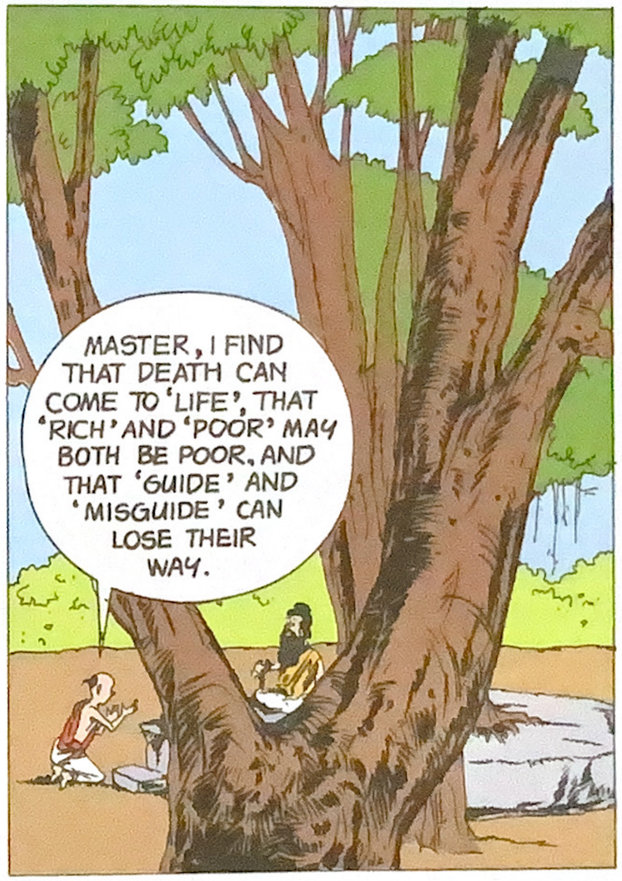
I AM GOING THERE MYSELF. YOU CAN COME WITH ME.

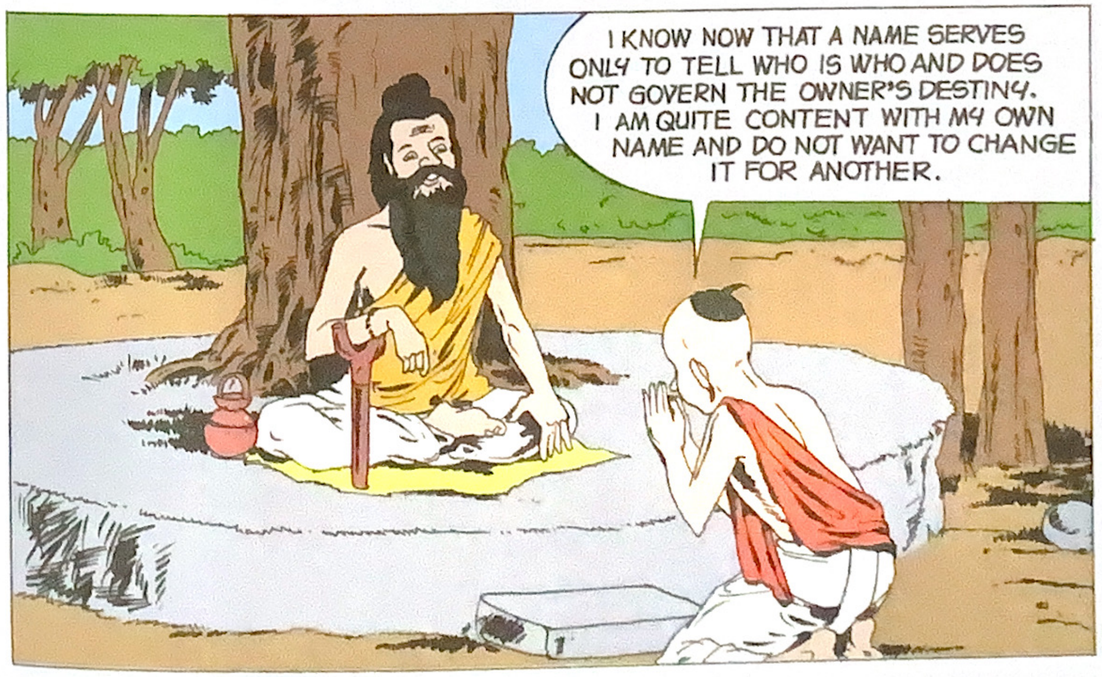

AFTER THEY HAD GONE A LITTLE WAY —
WHAT IS YOUR NAME, FRIEND?
I AM CALLED 'GUIDE'!


'GUIDE'? AND YOU'VE LOST YOUR WAY?
ARE YOU MAKING FUN OF ME? WHETHER ONE'S NAME IS 'GUIDE' OR 'MISGUIDE', ONE CAN LOSE ONE'S WAY ALL THE SAME!

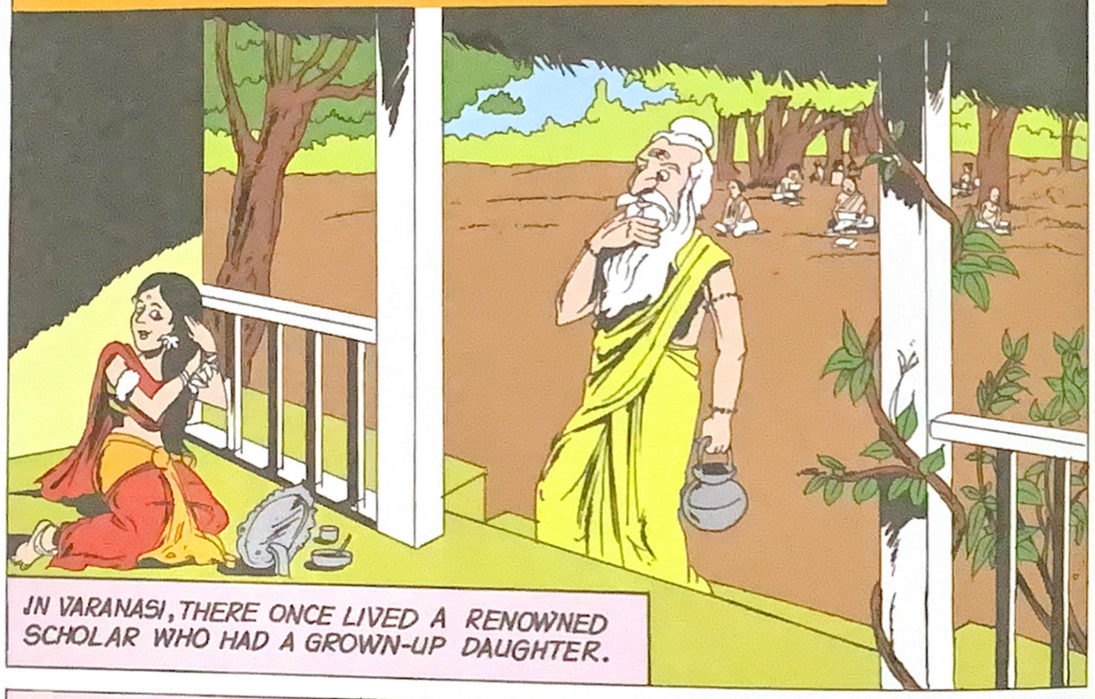

EVERYONE KNOWS THAT NAMES ONLY SERVE TO MARK WHO'S WHO AND NOT WHAT THEY ARE.
YES, I HAVE AT LAST COME TO UNDERSTAND THAT TRUTH.


AT TAKSHASHILA, LOWLY WENT DIRECTLY TO HIS TEACHER.
WELL, DO YOU STILL WANT TO CHANGE YOUR NAME?

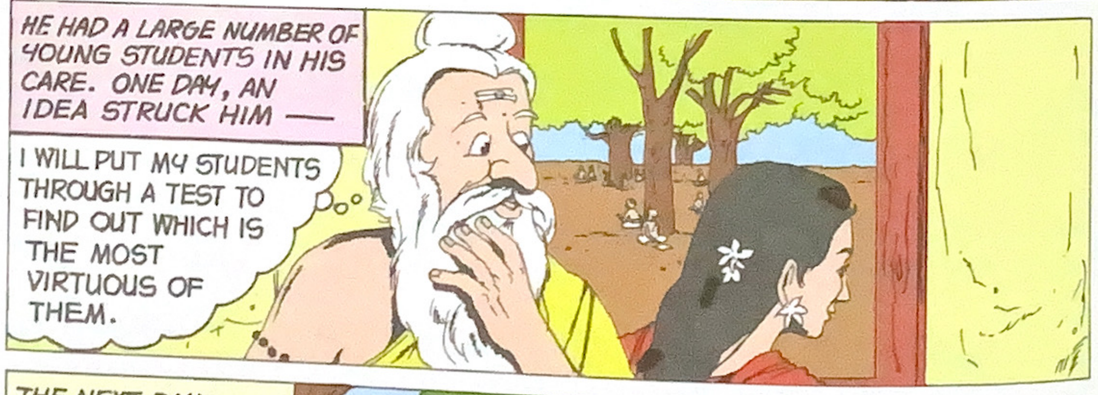

MASTER, I FIND THAT DEATH CAN COME TO 'LIFE', THAT 'RICH' AND 'POOR' MAY BOTH BE POOR, AND THAT 'GUIDE' AND 'MISGUIDE' CAN LOSE THEIR WAY.

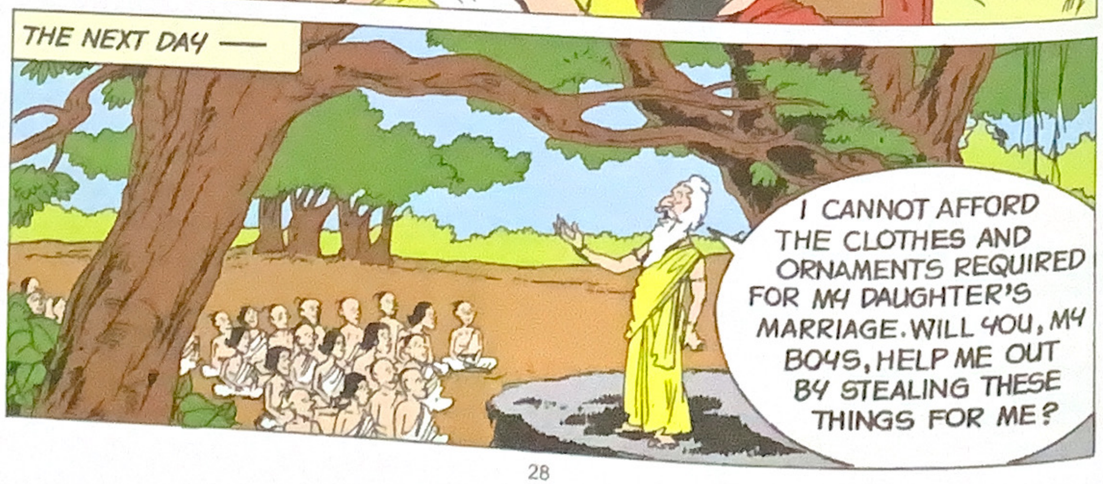

I KNOW NOW THAT A NAME SERVES ONLY TO TELL WHO IS WHO AND DOES NOT GOVERN THE OWNER'S DESTINY. I AM QUITE CONTENT WITH MY OWN NAME AND DO NOT WANT TO CHANGE IT FOR ANOTHER.

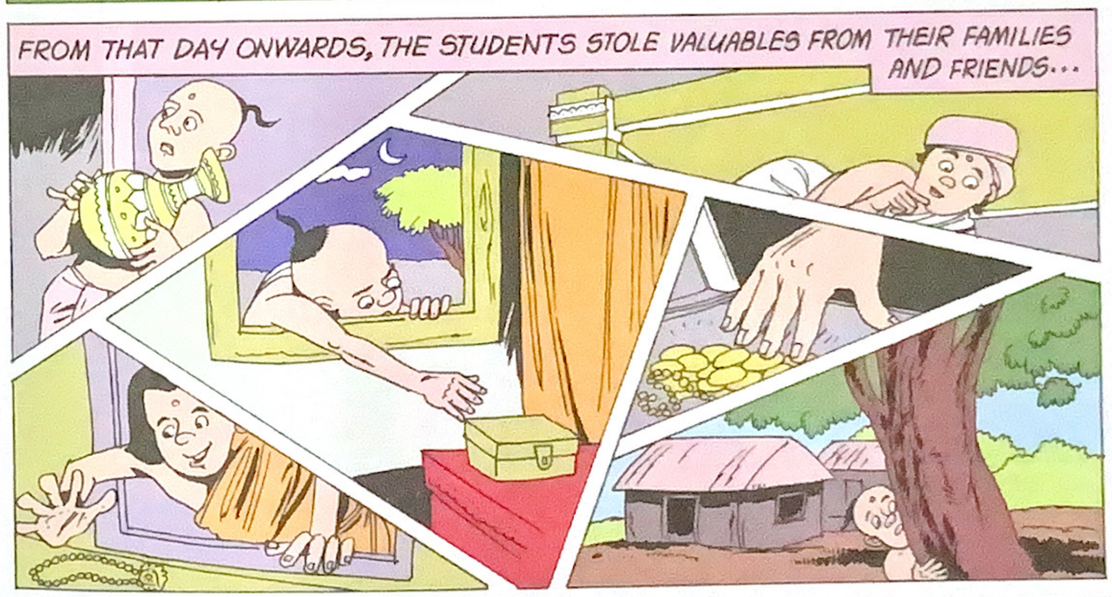
THE MOST VIRTUOUS STUDENT

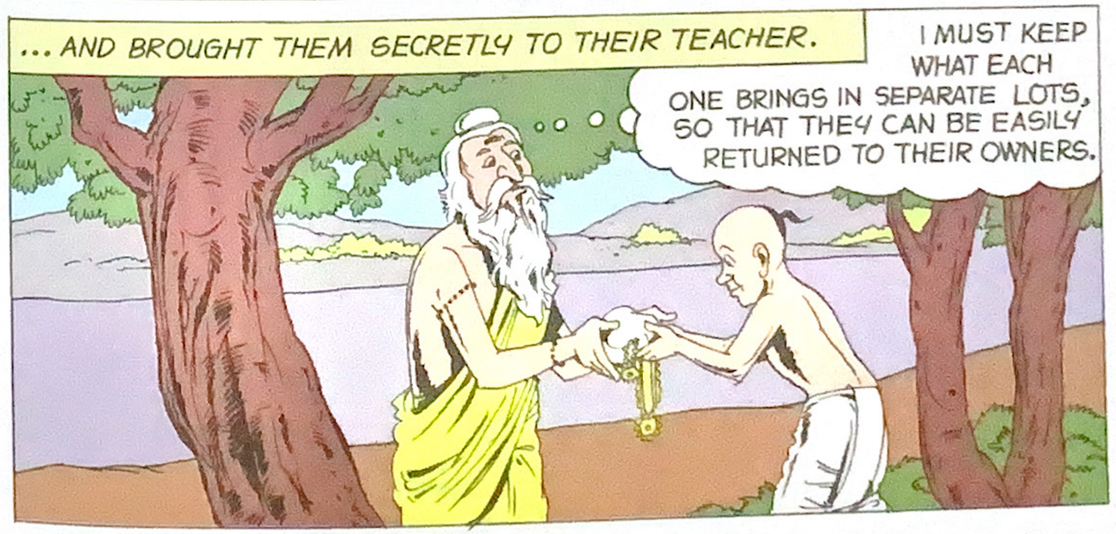


IN VARANASI, THERE ONCE LIVED A RENOWNED SCHOLAR WHO HAD A GROWN-UP DAUGHTER.









A FEW DAYS LATER, THE TEACHER SAW ONE OF HIS FAVOURITE STUDENTS LOOKING RATHER DEJECTED.

MY SON, YOU ARE THE ONLY ONE WHO HAS NOT BROUGHT ME ANYTHING!

YES, MASTER.

COULDN'T YOU STEAL EVEN A SMALL RING?

NO, MASTER. IT'S NOT THAT.

THEN WHAT IS IT?

YOU'LL NOT ACCEPT ANYTHING THAT IS NOT TAKEN SECRETLY. BUT I FIND THAT THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS SECRECY IN WRONG-DOING.

BECAUSE... BECAUSE, EVEN WHEN THERE IS NO OTHER PERSON IN SIGHT, I CANNOT HIDE FROM MYSELF!

THE TEACHER WAS OVERJOYED.

I HAVE FOUND THE BOY FOR MY DAUGHTER! OF ALL MY STUDENTS, HE IS THE ONLY ONE WHO IS VIRTUOUS!

MY SON, I HAVE NO NEED OF WEALTH. I HAD ONLY ASKED YOU TO STEAL AS A TEST TO FIND A VIRTUOUS MAN FOR MY DAUGHTER. YOU ALONE ARE WORTHY OF HER.

THEN HE SENT FOR ALL THE OTHER BOYS.

STEALING, EVEN FOR A GOOD CAUSE, IS WRONG. YOU HAVE FAILED THE TEST OF VIRTUE. YOU MUST NOW RETURN ALL THAT YOU HAVE STOLEN TO THE OWNERS.

THEN, ADORNING HIS DAUGHTER WITH JEWELS, HE GAVE HER IN MARRIAGE TO THE VIRTUOUS STUDENT.